

**EDUCATION, POLITICS
AND
WAR**

BY
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WHAT BRITISH PEOPLE OUGHT TO KNOW*

I am glad to participate in this function as it gives me an opportunity for expressing my appreciation of the work of the Congress and my respect for the Premier of Madras, Sri C. Rajagopalachari. There is an appropriateness in having this portrait in Gokhale Hall, as there is what may be called the Gokhale tradition in Congress politics, and Mr. Rajagopalachari is the ablest exponent of it. Gandhiji has always owned Gokhale as his political guru and the line of descent from Gokhale through Gandhiji to Mr. Rajagopalachari is straight and clear. Gokhale was the first Indian leader who visualised the need for a set of political workers who would adopt the spirit of renunciation, a set of political *saññyāsins* or dedicated souls, who would work with detachment and devotion for the welfare and freedom of the country. Gandhiji is undoubtedly the greatest of such *saññyāsins*. Of the Congress workers in general—I do not deny there are some who have joined the Congress organisation for positions and careers, some others who are in it for the sake of excitement and adventure it offers to otherwise dull and placid lives—the bulk have assumed poverty, have suffered privation, have endured trials and troubles in life and borne witness to the faith in them by lives of struggle and sacrifice. Among such men Sri Rajagopalachari stands in the forefront. (Loud cheers.)

* Speech delivered at the unveiling of the portrait of Sri C. Rajagopalachari, at the Gokhale Hall, Madras, on the 15th of July 1938.

Spiritualising politics, introducing principles of religion into public life, that had been the motto which Gokhale adopted in founding the Servants of India Society. Religion includes faith in human brotherhood, and politics is the most effective means of rendering it into visible form. Politics is but applied religion.

The Congress party fought the elections in 1937 on a definite programme to combat the new constitution, and end it, thus paving the way for Indian independence. After the elections, the All-India Congress Committee debated the question of office acceptance for nearly ten hours and decided by a majority vote of 135 to 78 for office acceptance under certain conditions. Doubt and discussion about the use of special powers in regard to the constitutional activities of ministers were terminated by the Viceroy's statement on 22nd June that all Governors would be anxious not merely not to provoke conflicts with their ministers to whatever party their ministers belong, but to leave nothing undone to avoid or resolve such conflicts. Congress ministries were immediately formed in seven out of eleven provinces and have a good deal of social and agrarian legislation to their credit.

The implications of the acceptance of office by the Congress are threefold. In the first place, from Non-cooperation and total rejection of the constitution to acceptance of office and working the constitution for all it is worth, is a remarkable change of heart and indicates that the Congress in spite of all difficulties and dangers, thought that some good could be derived from the con-

stitution. However one may disguise it, it is a virtual surrender of the Congress policy of destroying the constitution and a victory for constitutionalism which is in the Gokhale line.

Secondly, the daily working of the constitution, and day to day contacts with the civil services revealed that the services had people who were prepared to carry out loyally the measures initiated by the Government, even though these measures may not have their sympathy and agreement. The power of resistance, the feeling of hostility towards the British thus got unconsciously diminished when the Congress ministers had to rub shoulders with their opponents day after day.

Thirdly, there was the anxiety of the Congress to have time to implement their political programmes and show to the world that they were good not only in opposition but also in government, and in running the administration and in improving the material and moral well-being of the people whose destinies were committed to their charge. They were, therefore, persuaded to avoid dead-locks and try to have time to put their principles into practice. That is why one large section of the Congress is anxious to amend the federal part of the constitution so as to bring it nearer the popular demand.

The federal part of the constitution suffers from certain grave defects. Feudal elements are drawn into popular assemblies and would control British India while British India would have no power to control them. There are the safeguards devised to protect and preserve

British interests, financial, economic and political. There were the reserved subjects—army, external affairs, etc. What can we do with such a federal scheme ?

One section said, that after all, Indian Princes were also Indian ; they might be patriotic and adopt popular representation with regard to their nominees. We need not imagine that they will be more recalcitrant than the British in regard to transfer of power to popular representatives. As for safeguards an assurance might be got that they would not be used in regard to the constitutional activities of the Federal Ministers. With regard to reserve powers too, the Act was not final and immutable and might be altered if steady pressure was applied to the British. Suggestions for the amendment of the Act or even the framing of a new constitution, by the Federal Legislatures may be welcomed and seriously considered by the British Parliament.

There were thus many of the opinion that it would be possible to continue working in the local assemblies and to get an assurance that the Act would be amended before long. There were others who felt that already their power of resistance had got reduced and if they compromised with a thing so retrograde and reactionary they would be merely strengthening the hands of British Imperialism. The present Act is no answer to the political demand for self-government or the economic demand for social justice. It would be a shame, these people stated, for them to continue longer as a subject nation and it was high time they severed British connection and set up a social democracy in this country.

In between these two lines of thought, was Gandhiji who stood for making the best use of what they had and advancing further. In a great speech before the Second Round Table Conference Gandhiji said that time was when he prided himself on being a British subject, but that now he would be rather a rebel than a subject. Gandhiji had said then that he would love to be a British citizen and expressed the hope that the partnership between Britain and India might be an indissoluble one. Again in February 1937, Gandhiji had declared that if Dominion Status according to the Statute of Westminster were offered him, he would whole-heartedly accept it. There is no reason to think that he had changed his opinion. Whether the section represented by Gandhiji would win or others would, depended not on the Indians, but on the British.

If you watch closely and catch a face in repose of any intelligent young man or woman, you will see there is a shade which is not quite natural to youth, an under-current of sorrow that he belongs to a country vast, populous and ancient, that is still a subject nation. It is there, that impersonal detached shadow, and will be there so long as the present condition continues. The shame of subjection is written across the faces of young intelligent Indians and that is what gives meaning to the demand for independence.

It is no use talking to Indians about their ingratitude for the benefits Britain has conferred on India. She has built railways, telegraphs, irrigation works, has systematised law and made administration efficient. Italy

will do that for Abyssinia and Japan for Manchukuo. Any one who wishes to run an efficient administration will have to use all the modern appliances for his own purposes. These material benefits are conferred at the cost of our manhood, at the price of our dignity. The kingdoms of this world are not a compensation for the loss of one's soul. So long as the present relations continue, there will be a sense of unnaturalness, and an unconscious spirit of condescension worse than contempt or hatred on the part of the British and servility on the part of the Indian. That is the psychological problem.

During my recent stay in Europe I had on numerous occasions discussed the Indian problem with many British publicists and I have tried to impress on them to the best of my ability the urgent need for satisfying the Indian demand. I put it to them, "To-day in India there is at the head of the movement a leader and a saint, the like of whom is not born every year or generation or even every century and he demands only Dominion Status—the substance of Independence. It is just; it is expedient; it is inevitable, sooner or later. It is bound to come. History is for it and the forces of the world are with it. A European crisis will precipitate it. If you do not deal with the matter when he lives, when he is leading the movement on absolutely non-violent lines, and bring about a just and honourable settlement, I shudder to think what the consequences will be."

I explained to them in detail that, if Gandhiji failed, the people of India would feel: Here was a leader who adopted the non-violent method and failed to get the

barest justice from the British. And then non-violence would receive a set-back. Egypt, Ireland, South Africa will be quoted to prove that the British never granted anything in response to pleas of justice but yielded to expediency when they were pushed into a corner. If Gandhiji fails, if non-violence receives a set-back, world conscience will support the claim of this country, and a major conflict of a most unprecedented character is bound to be provoked between this country and Britain. The Great Indian Mutiny or the Non-co-operation movement would be nothing, compared to that which would break out if the just and reasonable demands of the Indians were not granted.

Office acceptance has brought about a change in the psychology of our people and has developed in them a new attitude of mind. The power of resistance of the people is bound to grow unabated. The spread of political consciousness to the masses of the country will stand to the credit of the great Congress and its decision to take up office. I do not think if it had abstained from office we would have witnessed the same results in the remoulding of the psychology of the people as has now been achieved.

I still hope that Britain would not miss the present golden opportunity of granting India her demand and developing a strong self-governing country in the East which would stand for ideals of peace, brotherhood and democracy and be of the greatest assistance not only to Britain but to the world at large. Why should not Britain do in peaceful, undisturbed, undistracted times what she

would have to do when the world is thrown into chaos? Are we to wait till then to get elementary justice for a people united in their demand?

I am not quite familiar with the details of the political situation in India and the different fronts on which Congress men are now fighting—Prohibition, Hindustani, new systems of education and so on—though I know that they are all intended to serve a great end. In the present state of our country, what is required is real guidance and direction. If the ‘dictator’ is democratic at heart, it does not matter much if he appears to be a dictator. For it only means, at any rate in our country, that he has a clear mind and fixed purpose. I am a great believer in democracy not because it is a fine political arrangement but it is the highest religion. The human individual is the highest, the most concrete embodiment of the Spirit on earth and anything which hurts his individuality or damages his dignity is undemocratic and irreligious.

There are people to-day in India who are anxious to introduce rigid doctrines into the country and talk of Communism, Fascism, etc. Communism and Fascism are divided in all essentials except in respect of one—that they both reject the conception of democracy and believe in the regimentation and moulding of human beings into a pattern. Liberals failed because they were not sufficiently socialistic. Communists failed because they were not sufficiently democratic. It was essential for them in India therefore to adopt advanced socialistic legislation to-day and lift up squalor and unhappiness from the lives of people. India should not be deemed to be introducing anything radical or revolutionary, simply because of

certain socialist measures. Even in Fascist and Nazi states, even in democratic England and America, there is more socialistic legislation than we find in our country.

If Government is interested in raising the general level of the people, it has to be bold and go forward with vision and courage. Differences between 'right' and 'left' and between Congressmen and Congress Socialists I am not able to see myself. Congress Socialists are also pledged to non-violence and democracy. Otherwise they may be Socialists but not Congress Socialists. The term 'Congress Socialists' means that they want a socialism which does not fetter the civil liberties of the individual. That is not the kind of socialism that prevails elsewhere. We have seen revolutions and counter-revolutions and seen some countries of Europe reduced to a cockpit of warring creeds. The same might result here if we start on highly revolutionary doctrines, adopted from outside. It is essential for us to develop on our own foundations and not copy the doctrines and ideologies of other countries.

A silent social revolution is now taking place in India. And when this silent revolution is proceeding it is essential that the movement should be guided by balanced minds, by men of vision and courage, faith and power and our Premier possesses these qualities in abundance. His picture here will be a powerful reminder to students who come to this Hall of his qualities of balance and courage, vision and strength. These qualities will help us to weld ourselves into a corporate manhood which will mean the emancipation of our country. Freedom is an achievement, not a gift.

DEMOCRACY : A HABIT OF MIND*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply sensible of the honour that the authorities of the Andhra Mahasabha have done me by electing me the President of this important session of the Conference. I had the pleasure of presiding over the conference of the Mahasabha at Nandyal exactly ten years ago, and to be called upon to preside once again at a time of such promise and hope is a privilege which I greatly appreciate.

1. THE WORLD SITUATION

A world bristling with armaments and gigantic intolerances, where all men, women and children are instructed in the use of gas masks, where public streets are provided with underground refuges, and private houses are equipped with gas-proof rooms, is conclusive evidence of the insecurity and fear in which we live. No intelligent Indian can help admiring the great races that live in Europe and their noble and exalted achievements in arts and sciences. His heart is wrung when he sees dark clouds massing on the horizon. It is, therefore, a matter of great relief that the clouds have dispersed and the hostilities avoided, at any rate for the present. The actual settlement, however, is not altogether a triumph

* Presidential address delivered at the Annual Session of Andhra, Mahasabha, Madras, in September 1938.

of peace. By localising conflicts, by yielding to the bully, we establish that the barbarous occupies a large space in our nature, and that we are ready to prostrate ourselves before the representatives of brute force. If wars are to be avoided, it is essential for us to utilise the intervals of peace for the development of a new world. History reveals that periodic sanguinary upheavals have been a constant feature of our social order. For civilization to be betrayed again and again, there must be something coarse at the very centre of it, and that is its slave basis and tribal patriotism. So long as the social order tolerates privileged classes and subject nations, wars are inevitable. We have to pay the price for world peace by setting up social democracies, by surrendering control over subject nations and by submitting national sovereignties to international control. Nations, like individuals, are made not only by what they acquire but by what they resign. We cannot sit on a powder magazine and smoke a pipe of peace. If we wish to make it impossible for any nation to grab what it wants by force, we must make it possible for every nation to achieve what is just without force.

2. THE INDIAN PROBLEM

A strong self-governing India will be of the greatest advantage to the peace of the world. If the sensitive opinion of this country is to be drawn into a firm allegiance to the ideals of the British Commonwealth, they must become flesh. When India asks for self-government which is her natural right, she is demanding that Britain should give a most practical and concrete expression to those

ideals. If excuses are invented for postponing the just solution of the Indian problem, critics will not be wanting who will declare that the British Commonwealth is still aggressively imperialistic in character, and its desire for peace is not due to the growth of moral sense or love of democracy but to the development of military aviation and the disappearance of its long treasured insularity. In the interests of India, Britain and the world it is necessary to end the tangle and set up a free India.

If the Indian National Congress protests against the present form of federal constitution, it is not protesting against the idea of federation. The problems of India, military, economic, and financial relate to the whole country, and in regard to them no distinction can be made between States and Provinces. A federal constitution is inevitable. But the proposed federation is unacceptable to advanced political opinion on account of its obvious defects, viz., that it brings together autocratic and democratic elements into an incongruous framework, that it does not give any responsibility at the centre, that the safeguards take away the substance of freedom. I hope most sincerely that the British statesmen are aware that these misgivings are legitimate and that it is essential to establish full responsible government in the country at the earliest opportunity. To be wise in time is the highest wisdom.

3. SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

A nation which has to devote the best part of its time and energy to political matters, whether by force or by freewill, is in a wrong condition. If India wishes to be

free, it is with the single desire of fostering a higher quality of life among its citizens. The aim of democracy is to foster a condition of life in which the State is a convenience and not an end, in which public will fairly expressed is paramount, in which the operation of law is calculable, not arbitrary and in which freedom of body, thought, speech and association is secured unless it can be proved to contravene the law or be subversive of public welfare.

We cannot have an effective democracy so long as its material basis, which is its economy, is defective. All forms of government today are agreed in taking steps for the improvement of material conditions and standards of living. Even Fascism, if we are to believe its theoretical exponents, is Socialism. Its aim is to control the means of production and distribution for the general benefit of the community, and therefore to restrict all forms of monopoly and individual power. There is nothing wrong in the ideal which attempts to make the State the owner of all public utilities for the benefit of all. The peasants form the backbone of the Indian community, and they have a right to the full fruits of their labour. The State today, with its elaborate machinery, can collect its revenues much more speedily and effectively than through the aid of a class of middlemen. Essential and equitable reforms in the matter of the relations of the landlord and the tenant are the only safeguard against revolution. The Congress is aware of the injustice of the present position but believes in the education of public opinion and the conversion of the landlords for remedying it. If we wish to avoid greater dangers, we must admit the paramountcy

of the claim of the tiller of the soil to the fruits of his labour. Even in the matter of the State ownership of public utilities, if the vast majority of voters return members who stand for this principle, Government can transfer the legal ownership to the State, compensating those from whom property is taken, if not adequately, at least decently.

I must, however, warn those who are for the introduction of rigid doctrines from outside into our country. The National Congress which is pledged to non-violence cannot support usurpation, much less humiliation and insult. It cannot believe that class-war is inevitable, for there is nothing inevitable in social phenomena. We cannot build a democratic State on the foundation of force. If once we develop a tradition of violence, it will become difficult to abandon it. If forcible expropriation is adopted as in Russia, contemporary history tells us that there will be either a Fascist or a Nazi dictatorship or civil war as in Spain. Violence has for its effect counter-violence and produces an atmosphere of suspicion, resentment, and hatred. There are some, I am sorry to say, who believe, that while India is their mother-country, Russia is their fatherland. Recent events show that even in Russia there have been great departures from the pure gospel of Communism. The methods of violence, class hatred and irreligion adopted there have made Russia an outcast among the nations of the world. I do not want to be misunderstood. I am all for an equalitarian society and I believe that it is not only not inconsistent with but is actually demanded by the highest religion. All attempts at establishing a social democracy, a more

equal distribution of wealth and opportunity, are a genuine manifestation of the religious spirit.

Guhyam brahma tad idam vo bravīmi
na mānushat śhresthataram hi kinchit.

There is nothing higher than man. It is religious idealism that has enabled India to endure and survive centuries of misrule, wars and pestilence and if it disappears, India will lose her historic character. It will be the greatest defeat that India will suffer, the defeat of the soul.

4. COMMUNALISM

Another obstacle to the growth of an effective democracy in India is the communal divisions. One of the most painful and reactionary features of the Government of India Act is the constitutional justification of the country's political life along communal lines. The Moslems of India are closer to their Hindu neighbours by race and habits than to the Muslims across the frontier. We have identical interests. With the increase of socialistic legislation, with the reduction of high salaries, with a clearer understanding of political influence as an opportunity of service and not power, the present artificial lines of cleavage may yield to political divisions.

5. NATIVE STATES

There is next the divergence between British India and the Native States and, if it is wide, it will imperil any federal constitution. India cannot be half free and half slave. We find in a number of States agitation for representative institutions, and it sometimes takes undesirable lines provoking repression by the governments

concerned. It is unnecessary for the Native States to adopt the usual circle of agitation, repression and reform. Fools learn by their own experience, but wise men learn from other people's experience. The responsibility for reactionary constitutions cannot be thrown on the British Government. The paramount power cannot support the rulers of Native States, if they deny to their subjects the very rights which have been established by parliamentary authority throughout British India. It is, therefore, essential that Native States should grant the basic liberties to their subjects and establish representative institutions. In their present form they are archaic survivals of an extinct feudal age, and, if they do not reckon with the rising tide of democracy and make suitable adjustments, their chances of survival are not bright.

6. SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY

Apart from these constitutional difficulties, we have to realise that democracy is not a mere political arrangement but a habit of mind. It is easy to acquire the forms of democracy but not so easy to get its spirit, that sensitive adjustment of the self to the infinitely varied demands of other persons. Essentially, a democrat is one who has that trait of humility, the power to put himself in the second place, to believe that he may possibly be mistaken and his opponent probably right. But events that are happening in organisations, small and great, make one suspect whether we have developed the democratic frame of mind which expresses itself in what we may call political good manners. Only the other day in the Bengal Legislative Assembly, an honourable member read a

letter, which, in the opinion of the Committee of Privileges " did not exist and does not exist "

We, in the Andhra country, are not, I am afraid, free from these defects. In our crowds we find signs of indiscipline and unruliness. Subjection to discipline and direction is not our strong point. We must realise that superiority to one's emotions is the mark of a cultivated mind. We cannot improve the country faster than we can improve ourselves. Our leaders and managers of public opinion have a great responsibility. They must not contract men's outlook, confirm their prejudices or inflame their passions.

7. 'THE ANDHRA MOVEMENT'

I am aware of the qualities of mind and spirit that are characteristic of the Andhra people. Relatively speaking their freedom from prejudice, their spirit of sacrifice, their enthusiasm for social service and their intense patriotism are remarkable. During the days of the Non-co-operation movement, these qualities found a concentrated expression, and there is hardly a village in the Andhra country which has not contributed in men and money to the national struggle. I have always felt that the differences between the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin, the Hindu and the Moslem, are much less acute in the Andhra country, and I believe that it will be possible to weld the people of the Andhra area into a corporate manhood for political purposes. It is not for me to speak about the intellectual and artistic life of the Andhras. If there is an agitation today for the formation of a separate Andhra province, it is due largely

to the intense desire to develop the cultural and artistic distinctiveness of the Andhra people.

The movement is not to be regarded as inconsistent with Indian Nationalism any more than the freedom of India movement is to be regarded as inconsistent with the interests of humanity. It is not motivated by any antipathy or ill-will to our Tamil neighbours. For centuries past Andhras have lived in the Tamil land, and Dravids have settled in the Telugu country, and perfect understanding and fellowship have governed their mutual relations. Any sense of irritation which may now and then be discerned is due to the unfortunate scramble for posts, and I am persuaded that with the formation of a separate province, it will disappear altogether and the two communities will live in fraternity and friendship.

8. THE ANDHRA PROVINCE

The agitation for the Andhra Province is not to be regarded as the out burst of a sudden caprice. It has had a long history. The first Andhra conference met in the year 1913 and in 1914 at Bezwada a resolution was passed asking for the formation of a separate province for the Telugu districts. And this resolution was repeated every year after that. In 1917 the Congress constituted the Andhra districts into a separate unit for its purposes. The Andhra representatives waited in deputation on the late Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford and pressed the claims for a province. Enthusiasm for the Andhra province abated a little when the energies of the Andhra leaders were engaged by the Non-co-operation movement of 1920 and onwards. But the demand for a separate

province was never abandoned. On 16-2-1927 a resolution was moved in the Council of State for the formation of the Telugu districts into a separate province, though it was thrown out on the ground that the motion should have been moved in the Provincial Council. On 14-3-1927 the Madras Legislative Council passed a resolution in favour of formation of provinces on linguistic lines. This principle was re-affirmed by the Madras Legislative Council in 1928 on a cut motion. Again in 1933 the Madras Council passed a resolution that steps be taken for creating the Andhra and the Karnataka areas as separate administrative units. Representations were also made at the Round Table Conference and some leading Andhras waited in deputation on Lord Lothian. But nothing came out of these endeavours.

May I, with the utmost respect, say that this failure to achieve our ends is largely due to our own apathy. Our leaders have been influential in the Madras Government from the year 1920 down to the Interim Ministry of 1937, except for a short interval. They were and are patriotic Andhras and for some reason, which I am not able to understand, they demanded a province when out of power but took no steps to accomplish the idea when in power. When the eleven Telugu districts were formed into a compact University area, this could well have been the preparation for a province. We succeeded in breaking the area into two and having the University only for the coastal districts. Emotion and idealism are good but disciplined emotion and directed idealism are better.

I do not think that it is necessary for me to make out a case here for the formation of an Andhra Province. It is

now a part of the accepted policy of the Government and of nationalist opinion alike. Perhaps, you will permit me to quote a few sentences from the speech of our Premier the Hon. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, during the recent discussion in the Madras Legislative Assembly. He said, "Let me now refer to the Statutory Commission's remarks. By Statutory Commission's remarks, I mean the Montagu Report. By that time, this matter was fully discussed, and what did they say? They said, 'For those who speak the same language, form a compact self-contained area so suited and endowed as to be able to support its existence as a separate province, there is no doubt that the use of a common speech is a strong and natural basis for provincial individuality. But it is not the only test. Race, religion, economic interests, geographical contiguity, due balance between country and town; between coast and interior, may all have to be relevant. The most important of all principles for practical purposes is the largest possible measure of general agreement on the changes proposed, both on the side which is gaining, and, on the side, that is the area, that is losing advantage. Judged by every one of these tests, including the latter portion, judging the question on every one of these ideals, separately and as a whole, the claim of the Andhras stands very good. There the use of a common speech is a strong and natural basis. As regards the other tests, namely, race, religion, economic interests, geographical contiguity and due balance between country and town, on all these points there is no cause for opposing the claim for a separate Andhra province. Therefore it is but right to pass such a resolution. It was the

conclusion arrived at on a general agreement and by the Statutory Commission who examined the whole question. Some of these tests may stand against the formation of some other provinces, in some respects. But so far as the claim for an Andhra province is concerned, every one of the points in the proposal may be tested by every one of these considerations, and it would still pass. Therefore, Sir, I support this proposition and hope the House will accept it." I may just add that, having regard to the tendency towards decentralisation on territorial as well as administrative lines, which is so marked in all progressive democracies, it is desirable to split up a large area like the Madras Presidency into two compact and strong units. A large homogeneous population inhabiting a contiguous country of vast dimensions knit together by close affinities of race, language and tradition with hopeful chances of industrial and economic development constitute, in my opinion, a most formidable justification for the creation of a separate province. With the development of democratic institutions and the increasing participation of the people in public affairs it will be more useful to conduct the business of the government in the language of the area. It is an area covering over 75,000 sq. miles. Its population is nearly 17 millions. It will be much larger than Assam, and Baluchistan and almost equal to Bengal in size. With such subsidy as we should get from the Central Government and our share of provincial revenues, I hope, I will not be charged with rashness, if I say that the future Andhra Province will be self-supporting, though to my mind the problem is not

one of finance or administrative management but of psychology and sentiment.

I must, however, here refer to one or two questions. The first relates to the Ceded Districts. It is futile to ignore that there is a strong body of opinion in these districts against the formation of a separate province for the Telugu area. They are afraid that the Andhras of the coastal districts who are more advanced and articulate might adopt an attitude of condescension towards them on account of their backwardness in certain points. I do hope that our friends of the Ceded Districts will not approach their coastal brethren in a mood of inferiority or look upon them as strangers. The two groups speak the same language, inherit the same traditions, and have vital interests in common. If we are not able to unite, that only shows that we are incapable of the elementary arts of social adjustment and political craftsmanship. I am pleased to hear that their apprehensions are considerably allayed by the Sree Bhag pact. In any case I am anxious that the Ceded Districts should not prove an Ulster in the Andhra country.

All these difficulties could be obviated if Madras is made the capital of the future Andhra Province. Madras occupies a fairly central position and serves as a link between the Ceded Districts and the coastal districts. It has had for a long time important Andhra affiliations. In its origin and development, the Andhras have played a great part. In the City itself we have a lakh and a half of Telugus. It seems to be the most natural centre for the Andhra Ptovince. If, however, for any reason this idea

does not commend itself to the Government, the City can be divided into two parts and two capitals can be set up. Such a demarcation of the City will have to be done by a commission charged with the fixing up of boundaries. I do not think that there are any constitutional or practical difficulties in the matter of the location of the Andhra capital in Madras. There are several instances where cities that are almost one have two different jurisdictions and work under two administrative units. The instances of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, of Bangalore City and Bangalore Cantonment, of British and Native Cochin are well known. Business and commercial interests will welcome the proposal of the Andhra capital in Madras and the interests of economy in expenditure will justify it.

It is a pleasure to know that the Madras Government have written strongly in favour of the constitution of the Andhra Province. I am not, however, very happy about the resolution which the Madras Assembly adopted. It reads "This Assembly recommends to the Government that the view of this Chamber of the Legislature of Madras be communicated under section 290 of the Government of India Act 1935 to His Majesty in Council that steps may be taken as early as possible for the constitution of separate provinces so as to place under separate autonomous provincial administrations the areas, wherein the languages predominantly spoken are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam." This resolution does not carry us far. It takes up a specific demand and lifts it into the inanity of a general principle. If, in addition to the principle, the resolution demanded the creation of an Andhra province it would have satisfied

the Andhra sentiment. I can understand the mood of disillusion and chagrin in which the Prime Minister found the Andhra districts during his recent tour. I cannot, however, refrain from entering my strong protest against the disrespectful demonstrations that were directed against him. No situation, however, charged with political acrimony, can justify a lapse from good manners. From the civilized we expect at least civility.

There are those who believe that the Congress Working Committee's resolution of 28-7-1938 is not quite fair to the Andhras. It does not show an adequate appreciation of the intensity and urgency of the Andhra problem. The Working Committee is naturally anxious that the demand for separate provinces should not engage the energies of the Congress workers to an extent that will take away from concentration on the general Indian question. The way in which the Andhra leaders have all these years subordinated their local interests to those of the nation is a proof, if proof were needed, that the Andhras at any rate are not likely to relax their efforts on the national issue. I am convinced that the agitation for a separate province is not likely to prejudice in any manner the work for Indian freedom. I hope I will be pardoned if I say that I do not see any justification for postponing action on the Andhra question till after the settlement of the Indian problem. Besides, the creation of provinces is a matter relating to the provinces and so belongs to that part of the Constitution in respect of which the Congress is already in power in our province. And I am not exaggerating when I say that even in the Imperial Assembly the Congress has considerable power and can,

if it is so advised, take steps to push through the ideas of the Madras Government in this matter.

Under section 29D of the present Act the new province can be created by means of an Order-in-Council of His Majesty. The section says that the Secretary of State should consult the Federal Legislature and the Provincial Legislature including the respective governments. It is, therefore, our duty to bring such pressure as we can to bear on the authorities. I should like to respect the wishes of the Working Committee and so long as they are not sympathetic to the idea of a deputation to the Secretary of State, I do not think that it is advisable for us to think of such deputations. Possibly, a council of action may be set up for taking such steps as they deem necessary for the accomplishment of this idea and in consonance with the resolutions of this Conference. But that is a matter for the Conference to decide.

I may, however, say that with a Premier who has openly expressed his sympathy with our cause, a Governor who, I am sure, is very friendly to our aspirations, and a Secretary of State who, I know, will view our appeal with the utmost sympathy, our cause is bound to succeed. Let us press for it with all the energy and enthusiasm we can mobilise.

RELIGION AND POLITICS*

May I express to you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, my cordial thanks for inviting me to address this Convocation. It is a matter of regret to me that I was not able to undertake this pleasant duty in previous years. I am touched by the many signs of courtesy and consideration which I had received at your hands. I feel it an honour to be associated with this University as its Honorary University Professor of Philosophy and a member of its academic and administrative bodies. You will forgive me if I have not found it possible to show my interest in this great University in any effective manner.

I

The Soul of a University

The most valuable thing about a University is its atmosphere, something in its life that enters into character and influences everything in after years. While this University emphasises the religious basis of education, it gives equal importance to the practical side. Its Engineering and Technological departments are the pride of our country. It imparts to you the arts and discipline necessary for taking part in the new industrial age. It attempts to make you into good and efficient men with directing ability and productive power. But you will forgive a mere student of philosophy if he affirms that India will find a way out of her trials and achieve once

* Convocation Address, Benares Hindu University, 17th December 1938.

again the distinction of a great civilisation if she works for the attainment, not only of those things which are necessary for existence but also for those finer and delicate values which constitute "the grace of life". This essential side of University education is fostered by its teachers who create the spirit of the place. It is your good fortune to work in a University presided over by a Kulapati who reminds you of the great teachers of old. Your Vice-Chancellor is a national asset, a sage of simple life and great heart, a dreamer and a builder. Though the founder of this University and a maker of modern India, he is untouched by personal ambition, and animated in all his work by faith in God and love of country. His example is a buttress against cynicism and spiritual despair, for, in the last essence, whether one is prosperous and successful is infinitely less important to the true self than belief in mankind and its destiny. Who holds firm to this will never lose the sweetness and savour of life and your Vice-Chancellor has never faltered in his faith.

II

The Basis of Religion

I offer my warmest congratulations to all of you who are receiving degrees to-day, specially those who have won prizes and medals. Let them not, however, think more highly of themselves than they ought to. University distinctions are not everything in life. There is something which is much more important and that is life itself. Your work in this University is utterly vain, unless in the years to come you shall find the lessons you

have learnt here of some value for the grim and relentless business of actual living. If your education does not help you to live well, if it does not teach you to get on with others, it has failed of its function. This social virtue does not depend on learning, on the number of books you read or the number of facts which you know but on the proper understanding of human nature. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Nārada appeals to Sanatkumāra that he is sorrowful though he knows all the branches of knowledge. "I am merely a knower of texts (mantravid), not a knower of self (ātmavid)." I am afraid that our schools and Universities, our libraries and laboratories, all this immense apparatus and effort do not seem to have given us greater disinterestedness, greater humanity.

When I was a student nearly thirty years ago, we had great faith in the ideals of science and education, democracy and peace—with the growth of science we thought we would conquer pain; with the spread of education and enlightenment, we imagined that we would banish ignorance and superstition; with the extension of democratic institutions we hoped that we would remove all injustice and move towards an earthly paradise: with the increase of humanitarian sentiments we thought wars would be abolished. We believed that we could use intelligence in our dealings with physical environment, our social institutions and our inmost selves—we assumed that it was all a question of technology or engineering like control of floods or improvement of communications. Science has increased its range and scope, education has spread widely but we are not so sure that life is richer or the future brighter. The failure of the intellectual

devices to improve our social relations has brought disappointment to the human soul. We find that the creation of ideal human relations is a different problem from the mastery of nature. The problem of living has become much more complicated and the mood in which we have to face it is not that of the self-complacent intellectual. If mankind finds itself in a mess, if things which should contribute to humanity's wealth have become an occasion for failing, it is because our conceptions of life are superficial. Human nature is not matter of surfaces but of strata, of external experience, of reflective consciousness, of moral and æsthetic apprehension, of religious insight. Every stratum has its own life. We have diseases of the body as well as of the mind. If cold and catarrh are illnesses of physical nature, if error, prejudice and falsehood are defects of our mind, lust, anger and jealousy are deformations of our heart. However much we may progress in the conquest of natural forces or in the control of social injustices, a very important part of the human problem will consist in the disciplining of our wayward desires and the achievement of an attitude of poise toward the inevitable limitations of finite existence.

You will be able to cope with the new problems, if you have caught a little of the spirit of this place. The true significance of a city or a country as of a person lies not in its face but in its spirit, not in its geography but in its history. Here in this city you feel the unseen presence of sages and saints who rose from time to eternity, and fashioned the destiny of a race. When your Vice-Chancellor started the idea of a Hindu University, there

were many who thought that he was entering into controversial regions and it would be difficult to give the students the essentials of the Hindu faith in a non-sectarian manner. The difficulty of Hinduism, as of other religions, has been the emphasis on the insignificant. We quarrel about the casual interpretations, forms and ceremonies instead of insisting on the unifying devotion to the permanent truths. The essence of Hinduism is a living faith in spirit and man's capacity to assimilate it. Rites, forms, ceremonies, institutions and programmes are subordinate to this end. The central fact of religion is the felt existence within us of an abounding inner life which transcends consciousness, a secret spirit which haunts us like a ghost or a dream. We feel certain powers moving within us, we know not what, we know not why. These vague intuitions, these faint dreams are the far cries of the Universal dwelling in us and the function of religion is to make our souls sensitive to the Universal. In man alone does the Universal come to consciousness. He alone is aware that there is a universe, that it has a history and may have a destiny. He feels most fiercely the adventure of awareness, the possibility of doom or deliverance. Religion appeals to the inward man, a stranger who has no traffic with this world. It is the core and centre of his being in which he strives to set himself in direct relation to the All. To develop the spiritual dimension we may have to withdraw our souls from the flux of existence, endure an agony of experience or travel barren and stony wastes of despair. When once this recognition arises, pride, prejudice, and privilege fall away and a new humility is born in the soul.

The natural desire of man is to be good and seek the true. No teaching can create this desire out of the void. No truth can be taught unless the potentiality for knowing it is already there in the spirit of the pupil. The instinct of spiritual life is in human nature. Religion is not a mere eccentricity, not an historical accident, not a psychological device, not an escape mechanism, not an economic lubricant induced by an indifferent world. It is an integral element of human nature, an intimation of destiny, a perception of the value of the individual, an awareness of the importance of human choice for the future of the world. It is a cleansing of man's soul, a sense for the mystery of the universe, a feeling of tenderness and compassion for one's fellowmen and the humbler creatures of life. To have religious men as the components of a society makes all the difference in the life of that society.

The uninterrupted continuity of Hindu civilisation bears witness to its vitality. The vitality of a living organism is to be measured by its power to carry off the waste matter which would prevent its proper functioning. When it fails to do this, it ceases to be creative, it is really dead, only a corpse. The most urgent question for Hindu Society to-day is whether it has life enough in it to overcome the obstructions within its own organism. If we try to embalm the present social structure, if we strive to defend the separatist tendencies of caste and the disabilities of the untouchables, we will be disloyal to the spirit of Hinduism. We cannot defend an unjust order of things and praise God. Faith in the one Supreme means that we, His off-spring, are of one body,

of one flesh—the Brahman and the Harijan, the black, the yellow and the white whose prayers go up to one God under different names. It is our own flesh that is torn when the shell explodes, that is pierced by the thrusting bayonet. The dignity of the individual who is the lamp of spirit must be the paramount consideration, if society is to survive. I have no doubt that when the world gets together and when a creative commonwealth is projected, India would be called upon to supply an indispensable part of its design for living.

III

The International Situation

The world has moved through different periods and we are now in what may be called the first era of world civilisation. The invention and spread of new means of rapid communication affecting both the movement of persons and the transfer of ideas have made the world into a single whole. This intermingling of races and cultures makes it possible for the world to grow into a moral community, a single commonwealth in which the human race will find ordered peace, settled government, material prosperity, the reign of law and freedom for all, which is the goal towards which all previous history has been leading. The instinct for such a community is in human nature. The ordinary human being is decent, is peacefully inclined, hates bloodshed, has no joy in battle. This fundamental humanity has kept our race going. It is to be seen in the mother at the cradle of her child, in the ploughman at his furrow, in the scientist in his laboratory and in the young and the old when they love and

worship. The love of man, this faith in the moral structure of society has upheld the spirit of man against many tyrannies and shall uphold it still.

Men, as we find them, however, are artificial products. We are made one way and society remakes us in another. • Our relationships with fellow-beings have become unnatural and artificial. We are made to feel, not that we are human but that we are Hindu or Moslem, French or German, Jew or Gentile. Our barbarous laws and institutions seduce us from our natural feelings of sympathy and fellowship. Fear, suspicion and resentment arise and wars which become each year more destructive are waged for the glory of the fictional abstractions of race and nation, class and creed. The world cannot permanently organise its life in an unjust and unnatural way without reaping chaos and conflict. The root cause of our present trouble is an inter-dependent world worked on a particularist basis. If moral principles are set at naught, if we are not faithful to the instinct of the common man, nemesis will overtake us.

We are filled with despair by the violence of the contemporary world. Recent events in China, Abyssinia, Czechoslovakia and Spain constitute a betrayal of moral values. Faith and hope have all but succumbed. Honour and magnanimity have decayed. The hot embers of sullen discontent and savage hatred smoulder everywhere. A peace which arises from mere weariness of war and founded on international injustice and political

opportunism has no element of permanence in it. The immense armaments in process of anxious accumulation in Great Britain, France and the United States of America do not give us any feeling of security. The world is shaken and exhausted and man has become an anguished being, living in the uncertainty of to-morrow, left alien in a world where there is neither joy nor love nor light nor certitude nor peace nor help for pain. The world is on fire and the sparks are flying. What is there to cling to in a world of madness and doom, of waste and hideousness? The whole machinery of modern civilisation is failing to perform even the basic function of keeping men alive. A world in agony asks "Is civilisation to end up in a mangled mass of twisted metal and torn flesh?" This cry of pain is indeed evidence that in spite of its sickness the body is alive and fighting for life. Though we must deeply deplore the outlawry, the savagery, the wantonness of the present, there is hope in that the fallow ground of the whole world is being broken up. Broken soil is full of promise.

It is easy to blame the Germans, the Italians and the Japanese for the present condition of the world, but they are like ourselves. We, perhaps, in their condition will do the same. Their weaknesses and virtues are in profound solidarity with our weaknesses and virtues. The development is the out-growth of an environment heavily weighted with tragedy and failure, mistakes and misunderstandings, resentments and hatreds. Take, for example, the case of the Germans. They lost a war and an incompetent government slipped in after the fall of

the monarchy, while the best part of the nation was still in the front. They suffered ignominy and hardships at the hands of the victors in the post-war period. They writhed under military invasion and financial subjection in peace time. To restore national pride and self-confidence, to resist the threat of a proletarian philosophy which increased middle class anxiety, the Nazi movement sprang up. We would not have behaved differently if we were in the position of the Germans. The problem ahead of us is a universal problem, a problem of humanity, not of this or that country. *

The world has seen a number of civilisations on which the dust of ages has settled. The jungle has conquered their great centres and jackals howl there in the moonlight. The spade of the archæologist uncovers for us dead cities that we may behold in them our pride and our shame. We assumed that whatever may be the changes and developments, the solid structure of Western Civilisation was itself enduring and permanent, but we now see how appallingly insecure it is. The menace of war has been a writing on the wall. The present world situation is a spiritual challenge. We must either accept it or perish. It is not safe to be immoral. Evil systems inevitably destroy themselves by their own greed and egotism. Against the rock of moral law, earth's conquerors and exploiters hurl themselves eventually to their own destruction. While yet there is time, there is not much left, we must take steps to prevent the helpless rush of man to his doom.

Revolutions rest on basic psychological changes in the minds of men. A certain degree of soul, Ben Johnson maintained, is indispensable to keep the body from destruction. If we would save the world from decay, we must do something to it with our spirit. We have to rebuild the city in the soul which has been so disastrously invaded by the false gods of pride and power and undermined by selfishness and stupidity.

A new generation is growing up with a new awareness of the oneness of humanity. It understands that peace is a positive achievement, calling for high enterprise. It is aware that world peace demands world justice and the obstacles to it are in the hearts of men which have been corrupted, in their prides and jealousies, in their attachment to comforts and possessions at other people's expense. National ambitions and racial passions blind us to real ends and long views. Unless we remove the sources of injustice and fear, we cannot make the world safe for peace. The history of man has been a continual struggle between the ideal of a moral community and the immoral forces of greed, stupidity and violence, individual and corporate. We must refine the spirit of patriotism so as to make it a pathway from man to mankind. A world conference to examine territorial grievances, control of raw materials and possibilities of collateral disarmament and establish the freedom of all nations, small or great, weak or strong may be summoned and if the powerful nations approach the task in a chastened spirit and in the faith that nations like individuals are great not by what they acquire but by what they resign, we may get nearer our goal.

IV

Britain and India

Great Britain can work for a liberal and democratic civilisation by transforming her empire into a commonwealth of free nations and that will be her greatest contribution to a better world order. It is difficult to understand her foreign policy or her Indian policy. It is unimaginable how Great Britain and France could view with indifference, if not sympathy, the consolidation of the dictatorships. If the present policy is persisted in, very soon, Holland and Belgium, Switzerland and Scandinavia will get into the orbit of the Berlin-Rome axis. Even today the British Government seems to be genuinely indifferent to the kind of government which will emerge from the Spanish war. No one can say with confidence what Great Britain will do in the matter of the Colonies or German advance into Ukraine. One explanation is that class feeling has prevailed over patriotism among the governing classes of Britain. Another is that the British people have lost their ambition and their ingrained sense of being the greatest power in the world and so have yielded to other powers and themselves suffered a loss of strength and prestige.

In a disordered world we seem to occupy a sheltered position and enjoy in some measure the amenities of civilised life. In the British Empire our position is a junior and subordinate one. So far as our defences go, we are in a helpless condition. Even now a great menace to the peace and safety of our country is growing up in

the far East and its tremors are felt in Siam and Burma. Germany is striving to extend her influence through Asia Minor, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan to the frontiers of India. In the dangerous condition of the world, where three great powers are acting in concert, adopting the doctrine of force as the inspiration of their policies, Britain must reaffirm her faith in freedom and democracy, not by words but by deeds and weld together the different dominions into unity on the basis of devotion to the ideals. Self-interest, international decency and justice demand the establishment of self-government in India. The most urgent problem is to work out a federation, not on the lines of the Government of India Act, but on lines which will foster and further internal unity among the different communities and between provinces and States. So long as India has to submit to a constitution imposed on her, she is not free. One of the greatest historians of the world, the German Theodor Mommsen, emphasises a truth which modern Germany has forgotten and Great Britain will have to remember if her methods are to be distinguished from those of Germany. "According to the same law of nature in virtue of which the smallest organism infinitely surpasses the most artistic machine, every constitution however defective, which gives play to the free self-determination of a majority of citizens infinitely surpasses the most brilliant and humane absolutism, for the former is capable of development and therefore living; the latter is what it is and therefore dead.*" If Britain fails to develop in time a strong

* History of Rome Bk. V, Ch. XI E. 7 by W. P. Dickson (1866).

and self-governing India, she cannot escape the destruction which has overcome empires as proud and seemingly as firmly rooted as her own. No nation is fully grown up until it has been purged of egotism and pride.

V

The Meaning of Democracy

The religious tradition of India justifies democracy and if she has not been faithful to this principle, she has paid for it by her suffering and subjection. Spirit is never more persuasive than when it suffers silently beneath the heel of oppression. Democracy is an achievement forged in the fires which make a nation's soul. When I speak of democracy, I am referring not so much to parliamentary institutions as to the dignity of man, the recognition of the fundamental right of all men to develop the possibilities in them. The common man is not common. He is precious, has in him the power to assert his nature against the iron web of necessity. To tear his texture, to trample him in blood and filth is an unspeakable crime.

There are doubts expressed today about democracy as a political arrangement. The rise of dictatorships and the collapse of democracies in Europe have made the problem an intriguing one. What is it, after all, that the mass of people desire? "As a rule," said Viscount Bryce, "that which the mass of any people desires is not to govern itself but to be well-governed." Totalitarian States may claim to offer good government, though the fundamental assumptions of democracy such as

equality before law, in suffrage, in opportunity are violated by them. Even in democracies, as recent events show, we have no popular control over fundamental questions of policy and direction. Take all in all, in this imperfect world, democratic government is the most satisfactory. It is based on the fundamental principles that, in the long run, government should rest on the consent of the governed and that there should be freedom of expression for minority groups. Without such freedom, the principle of consent loses its value. In democratic institutions, there is protection against the abuse of power. Irresponsible power is bound to be used in the interests of the group which possesses it. Again, freedom of expression is the only way by which we can let truth work on the minds of men. If we repress freedom of speech, we make truth subservient to the interests of the powerful group. The increasing regimentation of mind and the propaganda by which we dope the people with false news and keep them ignorant of the facts even in so called democratic countries, show how parasitical groups govern in them. A free press is an essential element of a free country, but it must be a responsible press. A corrupt press will prison the springs of social life. Besides, even when democratic government is inefficient and expensive, it is a process of education by which people learn to exercise responsibility. Again, it provides for orderly change. We can transfer power to other groups without social convulsions. Such peaceful and orderly changes by the process of law are the foundation of all civilised society. If we discard democracy, we can bring about changes only by revolutions.

VI

Economic Justice

Democracy does not mean a dead level in character and contribution, ability and insight. It is an equality of opportunity in matters of food, health and education. It implies economic justice. If we are content with anything less, democracy is a mockery. Economic justice involves a reshaping of the economic order. Capitalism is criticised from different points of view but here I may just indicate how it affects a democratic policy of life. By permitting a staggering degree of inequality with its inevitable consequences of poverty and lack of opportunity for masses of men, women and children, it produces social disturbance. This inequality is morally dangerous. It encourages the privileged sections of society to live in waste and luxury, with an utterly false sense of values, in a callous disregard of what their superior privilege means to the victims of the process which accords to them the privileges. We all know people whom wealth and ease have made decadent, who despise or patronise those presumed to be lower in the social scale, while acting with becoming humility to those who are considered to be higher. We cannot run a society where millions lack what a few people take for granted as necessities of life. Fellowship is difficult where classes are separated by snobbishness and bitterness, open or subdued, is bound to be felt. Again, capitalism appeals to the acquisitive instincts. While we cannot be expected to outgrow the profit motive completely, the other sides of human nature such as loyalty to the community, desire to do a good job tend to atrophy. Wealth

is regarded as the symbol of success and exploitation is assumed to be essential for comfort. Besides, political democracy cannot function properly so long as we have concentration of economic power in a few, though the forms of democracy may be kept up. Fear of losing one's job or of exposing one's dependents to starvation is a terrible threat to personal integrity. Naturally those who live under such a fear tend to group themselves into unions and they again cause conflicts. An economic order based on the social ownership of large sources of wealth and power would be far less dangerous to ethical life and more helpful to social fellowship. Comfortable classes should not proclaim that material things are unimportant. Their generosity is no substitute for justice which demands that the economic level of the whole population should be raised to a point where there will be a decent standard of life and genuine equal opportunity for all. Economic rewards should not be divorced from services. Acquisition of wealth must be contingent on the discharge of social obligation and profits derived from certain sources and exceeding a certain amount, must be declared unlawful. Huge incomes can be restricted by means of taxes. Taxation is democratic while confiscation is tyrannical. A collectivist society becomes tyrannical and spells great dangers to human life and freedom. But that is no justification for preserving the *status quo*, which does regiment the conditions of life for the masses while securing freedom for a few. Social revolutions are executed by those who are driven by hunger and dreams, by the felt need and the sure hope. They may face a hostile and dangerous world but their victory is certain

and it is the path of wisdom to bring about changes by peaceful and constitutional methods. The programme of the future cannot be imposed on us by threats. It will have to be hammered out in the give-and-take of the political struggle itself. Those who enter it must do so with a clear mind and a clean conscience.

Economic schemes are relative to the degree of social and economic development of the different communities. The general principles of the ancient Indian ideal of distributive justice by which not only the labourers and the cultivators but the barbers and the washermen, sweepers and watchmen were all allowed a share in the produce of the field may be modified to suit present conditions. The different functional groups are not classes which denote barriers and cleavages. Class in the sense of a group which makes its own peculiar contributions to the general welfare is right and legitimate. We will have different groups of farmers, of weavers, of lawyers and of doctors. They are different agencies in the national endeavour. No group, however humble its work, should inspire aloofness any more than differences of functions among the members of a cricket team. There are varying kinds of service but not varying classes of individuals. Honour and comradeship, humanity and sympathy are found among all classes. The distribution of classes into upper and lower should designate degrees of development in these qualities and not in their opposites of greed, selfishness and inhumanity. It is difficult to make society believe that a sweeper is as necessary as an engineer so long as society rewards them so un-

equally for their services. While equalisation of rewards is impossible, the present disparities should be diminished. But even revolutionary changes in the economic order can be brought about by means of persuasion. The innate conservatism of the people requires that even drastic changes should be brought about by constitutional methods. To decide conflicts by force is to abandon the democratic method of reason, conciliation and conference. In our anxiety to bring about a social revolution, we should not resort to force and thus destroy the democratic system. In every society we find an element of force and an element of persuasion. The better the society the more it depends on persuasion and the less on force. It must seek to harmonise the delicately balanced system between the rights of the individual and the obligations to society. A society without social impulses cannot cohere; a society without individual life cannot survive

But democracy is not to be interpreted as a levelling down. The majority of men and women are not interested in the higher pursuits of the mind. They hate mental exercise and love physical enjoyment. If you provide them with food and drink, sexual enjoyment and noisy distractions they are perfectly happy. For them the higher life is unspeakably gloomy. If any one believes that the social millennium will dawn near if only we have a sufficiency of material goods for all, I would advise him to go to any large city and note what the majority of men and women who have prosperity and leisure do. To those who have the least spark of humanity, their contentment with life at the animal level and callousness

to any thing higher seems a dreadful calamity, though those who are in it sing and laugh and are utterly insensible to their own misery. If we have headache we feel the pain but we are painfully unconscious of this ignorance (*avidyā*) which has us by the throat. It is the function of universities to make us conscious of our limitations. .

VIII

Conclusion

It is essential to develop the democratic habit in dealing with the class conflicts and communal divisions. This habit is founded on the rarest of all virtues, tolerance, which is a symptom of understanding, self-possession and power. To be tolerant is to be humane and civilised; to be intolerant is to confess a mean and trivial spirit. The desire to regulate other people by our own tastes and opinions is the outcome of a complex of fear, jealousy and impudence. To persuade others to one's own views is right; to penalise them if we cannot, is wrong. India is a mould into which many different potters poured their clay. Her hospitality towards other cultures and civilisation is well known and its development requires to be encouraged by our schools and colleges. If we are to pursue the study of religion and culture in a way appropriate to the age in which we live, we need the helpful stimulus of contacts. The establishment of a Chair of Islamic civilisation in this university may be seriously considered.

My young friends, our country is in a state of flux and you will have to choose with care your path. You will have to make very hard decisions. There are so many groups, political and economic, which ask for your allegiance. And you are young. To be young is to live in the age of conviction. What one knows one knows absolutely. There can be no argument about it. It just is so. May I beg you to seek strength in the faith on which this institution is built and stand up for it and that is much, for victory is not in our hands.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA*

I should like to take this opportunity and thank most cordially the Indian community of South Africa for their gracious welcome and hospitality to me during these three or four weeks. I am greatly delighted that it was possible for me to accept the invitation of my friend the Agent-General and the Indian community to spend a part of my Easter vacation in this beautiful country. The good wife of the Agent-General, Mrs. Rama Rau, by her devoted care and attention to my fads and idiosyncracies, has made me feel quite at home in this distant land. In all the centres I visited the European community treated me as a welcome guest. The civic receptions in all the chief centres, the University functions at Capetown and Johannesburg, informal meetings with distinguished representatives of the different communities including members of the Government, all marked with great courtesy and consideration, have given me a memorable experience. It will be invidious to mention names, nor would it be possible, but let me express my gratitude to all those high and low, young and old, who have made my stay here so pleasant and enjoyable.

European Situation

During the whole time I have been here the European situation has been one of acute tension and anxiety.

* Speech broadcast from the Durban Radio Station on 10th April 1939.

No intelligent Asiatic can help admiring and reverencing the great races that live in Europe and their noble and exalted achievements. His heart is wrung when he sees dark clouds massing on the horizon. Hate is spreading like a vast black cloud. Terror is becoming the technique of states. Fear is over the world and our hearts are failing us—we cannot help asking why we are unable to save ourselves ; why this incomprehensible world is so savage and stupid and suffering ; why we make ourselves responsible for such queer happenings and monstrous contrasts. We have great forces for increasing the general welfare, for removing the evils of poverty and the injustice of national abasement and racial humiliation, for bringing about a more equitable organisation of human society, but the leading nations of the world still cling to the belief that power is the end and object of national life for which all principles of truth and freedom can be sacrificed. The world of nations is like a nursery, full of perverse, bumptious, ill-tempered children, nagging one another and making a display of their toys of earthly possessions thrilled by mere size.

Competition for Material Wealth and Domination

The desperate competition for material wealth and domination, coupled with the vastly increased capacity of the human brain for utilising the forces of nature, and the technique of propaganda has intensified the general anxiety and oppression, the regime of greed and fear. We measure the greatness of nations by the wealth of their possessions, by the extent of their armaments. Anyone who has not £ 500 a year is a figure of fun,

to be sneered at ; any nation which fails to convert her corporate manhood into a military arm is to be despised. A wrong system moulds our minds and makes it difficult if not impossible for even the best and most enlightened men to act fairly. The greatest impediment to the advance of civilisation to-day is the old familiar institutions of race and class to which we are emotionally attached. They have always brought disastrous consequences. In spite of her great contributions of democracy, individual freedom, intellectual integrity, the Greek civilisation passed away as the Greeks could not combine even among themselves on account of their loyalty to the city states. Their wealth, their pride, their glory, their literature and art, had for their shadows the slavery of large masses, their poverty, their shame. The Roman gifts to civilisation are of outstanding value, but the structure of the empire of Rome had completely ceased to exist by A. D. 500. The *Pax Romana* reigned but it was the peace of the desert, of sullen acquiescence and pathetic enslavement. The fall of Rome is not to be explained solely by the barbarian invasions. Treason from within was its cause quite as much as danger from without. In the letters of Sidonius we hear of censorship, of bribery and corruption, of the persecution of Jews. Modern civilisation is exhibiting to-day all the features which are strangely similar to the symptoms which accompany the fall of civilisations, the disappearance of tolerance and of justice, the insensibility to suffering, love of ease and comfort, selfishness of individuals and of groups, of the segregation of men on grounds of blood and soil. A social order, directed to

the good, not of mankind as a whole but of a powerful privileged few among individuals as well as nations, is essentially unjust and can only be defended by the force of arms.

Security Confused with Civilisation

To protect our security, which we confuse with civilization, we place our trust in outward unspiritual things, in accumulated wealth and death-dealing weapons. We persuade our young men to wound and kill, to maim and destroy as our protection against the victims of our injustice and greed. If there is not a drastic change in our thoughts and practice our race may die, not of natural catastrophe or dread disease, but of so-called civilisation, which is a compound of human cupidity and scientific genius. Man as he is, is not the last word of creation. If he does not, if he cannot control his passions of greed and egotism, if he does not and cannot abandon the worship of the fictional abstractions of race and group, class and nation, he will yield his place to a species more sensitive and less gross in its nature.

Turning to the East

To-day our civilisation with its military and forceful mode of living, faced by the possibility of racial suicide, is turning to the East in a mood of disenchantment. The Indian civilization is not great in the high qualities which have made the youthful nations of the West the dynamic force they have been on the arena of world history, the quality of ambition and adventure, of nobility and courage, of public spirit and social enthu-

siasm. But it has lived long, faced many crises and preserved its identity. Its age suggests that it has a sound instinct for life, a strange vitality, a staying power which has enabled it to adjust itself to social, economic and political changes. Perhaps one needs a good deal of suffering and sorrow to learn a little understanding and tolerance. A spiritual attitude to life has nourished it a little more persistently. Is it too much to hope that a proper orientation, literally the values derived from the Orient, the truths of inner life, of humility and love, will bring healing and true love to this sorely distracted and diseased world in which we find ourselves?

I am an optimist. I have faith that the spirit of man cannot be permanently entombed. The secret solidarity of the human race cannot be abolished by the passing insanities of the human world. The peoples of the different countries are anxious to live in peace. They are unwilling to indulge in hate, suppression and fear of others which their leaders inculcate. It is not in them to gloat over the sufferings of others simply because they do not belong to their race or country, but their social nature is distorted into queer shapes by the poison poured into their blood by jingoes in their country. We want leaders who will cut across the artificial ways of living which seduce us from the natural springs of life, to recognise that our inhuman attitudes to other races and nations are no more than artificial masks, sedulously cultivated by long practice in dissimulation. Racism and nationalism which appeal to our baser passions, which require us to bully and cheat, kill and loot, all with the

feeling that we are profoundly virtuous and doing God's work are abhorrent to the free man. For him all races and nations lie beneath the same arch of heaven. Every human being who is not a sadist, is a great deal happier when he or she is merciful than when he or she is cruel. It is our nature to be decent and just, but our laws and institutions exert a steady pressure on us to become worse than we are. We have to fight for humanity, that is what we are losing to-day ; the sense of human relationships with our fellow-men, of human responsibility, of human life.

What we would, that we cannot do. The machine has made powerless the human will. We have become conscious or unconscious slaves of necessity, of the established atmosphere. We have to recapture our humanity. These are stirring times when the earth seems to tremble and the future is big with unknown things. It depends on each of us what it will be like. Our effort counts. There are many who are persuaded by despair that there is no remedy against the follies of the modern world but to escape or destroy. It is not true. There is another within the reach of all, the principle of love, which has upheld the spirit of man through many tyrannies, and shall uphold it still. Let us prefer to be human. Leave fighting to animals and let us suffer, if need be, as men for our conscience and for humanity.

I shall not be truthful if I do not say that my Indian friends in South Africa are smarting under disabilities and restrictive measures, and feel that the tallest of them

have to submit to indignities on account of their colour. A more generous handling of the problems, which are in all conscience, difficult, is essential. We must have faith in the capacity of every normal human being, if given a fighting chance, to become a self-sustaining, self-respecting happy member of society. To weld together into an organic state the European and the Native, the Coloured and the Asiatic is a formidable task, but it is not insuperable. The differences need not be fused, but they need not conflict. So long as the wealth, pride and power of one community are based on the shame, subjugation and poverty of another, we will have insecurity and fear. No State can acquiesce in mal-adjustments of wealth and labour, leisure and opportunity and endure for long. To make the different communities feel that they *belong* to South Africa, to stimulate in them a pride in the country, to enable them to rise to their full manhood under its laws and institutions should be the aim of far-sighted and liberal statesmanship. I have found leaders of such conviction who feel that moral principle, peace and tranquility, safety and stability of the State alike demand a re-ordering on the principles of freedom and justice for all. It is my earnest hope and prayer that they may succeed in building up a just and prosperous South Africa, for prosperity without justice is like a house built on sand.

ACID TEST OF BRITISH HONESTY*

The international situation is one of neither peace nor war as the Prime Minister put it. It is uncertain and anarchical.

Sparks are flying in the Far East, in Dänzig and elsewhere and any moment the world may be on fire. The leading statesmen of all the nations are aware that a war between the great powers would mean an obliteration of civilized values for many decades. Fear of the tremendous consequences of war is acting as a deterrent. The one passion of a disinterested soul is for peace. The determining factor is the negative fear of war and not the positive love of peace. The present race for armaments is an illustration for it. If it is not to end in disaster, an attempt should be made to correct the crying injustice, even though it may mean a sacrifice of national interests. If we do not recognize the world on a just basis but persist in maintaining the *status quo* simply because it is to our advantage, we will only postpone conflicts but cannot prevent them.

Britain and India

I am sorry to say, that the British are not showing great wisdom or statesmanship in regard to India. On May 19 His Majesty the King declared in Canada that the units of the British Empire are bound together by an

* A statement issued to the Press on arrival from Europe—Bombay, July 1st, 1939.

allegiance to common ideals and the adoption of common principles of Government. The other day the Prime Minister in his speech at Cardiff complained that it was not fair to divide the nations of the world into "haves" and "have-nots", for the British Empire is dominated by a different ideal. It does not stand for the exploitation of its possessions, but for their development in the interests of their people. The present opposition to British policy in India is animated by a faith in these ideals, and "common principles of government". The scheme of 1935 with its enormous safeguards and restrictions intended to ensure stability with no real parliamentary responsibility at the centre and with a miscellany of partly democratic and partly autocratic units is not what one would call a democratic constitution. It is not without reason that a recent American thinker, who argues for a union of democracies deliberately excludes India in his book on "*Union Now*". India is the acid test of British honesty. It will not do to profess faith in democracy and practise undemocratic methods. Reports reach us of the increasing influence of Axis powers in India and the only way to terminate it effectively is to make India feel that England is earnest about the setting up of a self-governing India.

Muddling Through

Britain adopts a policy of pragmatic empiricism, what is called muddling through. But she has not always muddled through to success. History is full of instances of her failure. The loss of American colonies is the peak failure. The persistent prejudice against Irish Home

Rule all but lost Ireland to the British Commonwealth. Slowness of evolution is the cause of all revolutions. I am afraid there is not much time to be lost. India demands on the part of Britain loyalty to those "common principles of government" to which the King referred, an application of them in British India and Indian States, where Britain is the Paramount Power. If India remains of her own free choice a member of the British Commonwealth, she will be a bridge between East and West and contribute to a world understanding and world peace.

Federation

When the Congress and other political bodies object to the federal scheme of 1935, they do not object to the principle of Federation. All sane political thinkers are agreed that in the dangerous conditions of the world, the political and administrative unity of India is an imperative necessity. We cannot assure any one that peace and security belong to the natural order of things. An Indian Army, Navy and Air Force are essential to maintain internal peace and security from external invasion. It is no answer to say that all these will take a long time. We have seen nations, both eastern and western, modernize themselves in a short period. India is not impressed by the speed and earnestness of the present policy.

Indian States

Indian States are not radically different in social and cultural development or patriotic sense from British

India. After all they recognize the Paramount Power. Imitation is the highest form of admiration. True loyalty to the Paramount Power demands the adoption of the principles which the British Government was obliged to adopt where it is directly concerned. I know a number of Princes and as patriotic Indians they will work for the general advancement of India to a higher political status. Their safety and survival are bound up with the rapid adjustment to changing political conditions in India and the world at large. Life is not all pageantry or even love of comfort, ease and wealth. The enlightened rulers must regard themselves as servants of the commonweal, and see to it that every class and every section enjoy in just measure the fruits of their labour.

The National Congress

In these two years of provincial autonomy, Congress Governments have shown that they can work out the social, economic and industrial problems with a general fairness and sympathy, striving wholeheartedly towards the one goal of happier conditions of life. They have shown their ability and genius for the positive work of building up a new India. Unfortunately there is an increasing feeling that the Congress leaders do not brook opposition, are impatient of criticism and are intoxicated with political power, I do not say that this impression is justified, but it was one of the powerful factors that determined the last presidential election. While the steps that are now being taken to purge the Congress of corruption and make it a more disciplined body are

greatly to be welcomed, we must also recognize the general weakness of human beings who are in prominent positions, their inability to preserve their humanity and good manners. We are all liable to be broken by the machinery of Governments. Perhaps annual changes in a part of the personnel of the High Command and the Working Committee so as to preserve continuity of policy, prevent the development of vested interests and give training and experience to new members, may help to consolidate the Congress ranks and strengthen its hold on the country.....

By our dissensions we are playing into the hands of our enemies. Fanaticism is an outcome of ignorance. Educated classes exploit the credulity of the uneducated. The communal differences are not religious. The very fact that they are severer of late shows it. They are due to scramble for posts, power and influence. Our troubles are the growing pains of a new political order and can be eased with forbearance and goodwill among the leaders of both communities.

In Africa

I was in S. Africa in the Easter Vacation. I saw the good work of the Indians there especially in Natal. The South African Government is anxious to maintain the political and economic supremacy of the two million whites in a country which has also six million natives and one million of coloured and Asiatic people. It is an untenable position. Every step taken to restrict the activities of the non-whites increases the bitterness

and endangers the solidarity of the community. The Indians were welcomed at a time and now they are not. These segregation measures are undoubtedly humiliating. Weak acquiescence is not what is expected of self-respecting men, but I am anxious that nothing should be done to foster racial discord by the Indian people. They must oppose these measures but in no spirit of violence. The attitude of the South African Government is supported by the British policy in Kenya. As for the non-European front, we must recognize that the history and position of Indians are different from those of the natives. While they can unite in opposition and work together wherever possible, there is no need to have one common front for all political and economic purposes.

SELF-GOVERNMENT IS THE RIGHT THING FOR INDIA*

Plea to Britain

The Working Committee of the Congress will soon review the question of India's part in the war. Those of us who believe that war as such is an evil, and that it is of no use to employ violence to put down violence, will not have much trouble of mind. * A large majority of us still think that we are not living in a perfect world but only in an improving world.

Great Britain has entered this war not in defence of possessions, but in defence of principles. She has the conscience of the world on her side in attempting to resist Nazi tyranny and the rule of force. Thinking men in India are deeply in sympathy with the Polish cause and the British attitude in the matter. Britain will make a tremendous appeal to political India if the substance of self-government is immediately granted in the Centre.

By temperament, Mr. Gandhi is a man of peace, and he will not be anxious to press for an advantage at a time when Britain is faced by serious troubles. But his chief difficulty will be to satisfy the members of the Working Committee and other leaders so long as effective responsibility in the Centre is not envisaged in the present Government of India Act. There ought not to be any haggling or bargaining in this matter. But wise statesmen like the present Viceroy should size up the state of feeling in the country and do the right thing, not because it is a state of war but because self-government for India is the right thing."

* A statement issued to the Press on the Declaration of War-Madras, September 5, 1939.

FEDERATION OF FREE NATIONS*

The resolution of the Working Committee reflects the hopes and fears of the Indian people. It unequivocally declares India's hostility to Nazi tyranny and aggression, its preparedness to undergo sacrifices for resisting it and making the world safe for peace and freedom. The Indian leaders wish to know whether this war is fought for maintaining the present position of India or for improving it so as to bring it into conformity with the professed ideals of democracy and freedom.

It is essential to assure India about the aims and objectives of the war. There are few in India who wish to harass Britain in the present crisis. A time of peril is not the time for bargaining or negotiations by India, but it is certainly the time for Britain to impress on the Indian people her sincerity and earnestness about freedom and independence of small and backward nations. Since a long war is anticipated, a united and contented India will be a moral and material asset to Britain. India's sympathy for Britain can be transformed into active and enthusiastic support by liberal statesmanship.

Evolving a New Order

While believers in humanity are greatly disturbed by the war and deplore the appalling human sorrow and suffering which it is causing to millions of our race,

* A statement issued to the Press on the Congress Working Committee's attitude towards War—Calcutta, September 16, 1939.

all this sacrifice and suffering will go in vain if we do not steadfastly stand up for constructive peace and freedom. All nations of the world are to-day entangled in an anarchical world order with their ideals of national sovereignty and economic self-sufficiency and if we do not reorganise the framework of the political order, these periodic human holocausts cannot be avoided.

We are living in a changed world. We can go round it in a week's time and produce enough to feed all. The world of independent sovereign nations with mystic significance is in dissolution and will soon be a past chapter in man's history. The present war may well be the birth pangs of the new order. The League of Nations, that great experiment of political mankind to civilise itself, failed because its controllers had not the courage to transcend the old order. If nations opposed to Nazism and violence are united by a common purpose, which goes beyond the present danger and work for a new order, India will be heart and soul with them. The first great step towards this consummation will be the immediate transformation of the British Empire into a Federation of Free Nations.

OPPORTUNISM IS NOT STATESMANSHIP*

It is most unfortunate that the Congress Ministries are obliged to resign and withdraw their cooperation in regard to the conduct of the war. This result was only to be expected after the Congress demand for a specific declaration of the war aims of Britain in regard to India and the unimaginative response to it by the Viceroy, the Secretary of State and Sir Samuel Hoare. The Congress demand was a natural one in view of post-war developments in Europe and India. The great struggle of 25 years ago, we called, the war to end war. The Allies overthrew the Hohenzollern domination, set up a League of Nations and Germany became a democratic country. But all our hopes proved illusive mainly because the powers that controlled the League were more anxious to preserve the static pattern of the political order than to respond to the dynamic rhythm of history.

When the present war broke out the public men of India from Gandhiji downwards expressed their sympathy with the Poles and their support of Britain's attitude to resist the determination of irresponsible dictators to oppress and plunder neighbours who are too weak to resist them. India's future was felt to be bound up with the victory of Britain and democracy. In the world today, small and weak nations have no chance of survival unless they associate themselves with some larger poli-

* A statement issued to the press on the resignation of the Congress Ministries—Madras, 27th October 1939.

tical formations. The Russo-Chinese bloc, the middle European and the Anglo-Atlantic are the three principal groups.

Give up Policy of Drift

India has the deepest sympathy by temperament and her recent historical past with the federal democratic union rather than with Sovietism or Caesarism. Only she is anxious that the British Empire must make itself true to its own great principles by correcting imperial injustices. Britain is not true to her avowed purpose so long as there are rigid frozen blocks obstructing the flowing stream and the critics will be careful to point out that the liberty-loving nations of Britain and France have the largest imperial possessions. Britain must give up the policy of drift which led to the loss of American Colonies and the neutrality of Ireland today. **Opportunism is not statesmanship.**

Nations like individuals wield lasting influence on human affairs by their devotion to an idea greater than their own self-interest, by the pursuit of a purpose larger than their own immediate advantage. It will be wiser to convince the world by your superiority in practice than by proclamations of your ideals.

Gandhiji and his fellow-workers agree that a time of crisis is not best suited for working constitutional problems. All that they ask for is a clear formulation of Britain's intentions in regard to India and implementing of them so far as it is practicable immediately, and setting up of a Constituent Assembly representative of all interests and groups including the British to draw up

a constitution for India. Such an answer would have united India and bound her to Britain in this grave crisis. Unfortunately British statesmen are doing less than their duty in exaggerating the difficulties of the minorities and in putting the Congress into opposition.

Congress Governments' Record

When Congress Governments were set up in eight provinces, there was a change from the revolutionary to the reformist attitude. They co-operated with British officials and the old bitterness diminished. They carried out with a good deal of success a programme which aimed at a higher standard of social justice, elimination of class conflicts and a fostering of the unity of national purpose. There can be no denying that the Congress represents the bulk of advanced political opinion in India as is evident from the last elections and the subsequent by-elections. **It is doing everything in its power to allay the apprehensions of the minorities and safeguard their legitimate interests. I have no doubt that an impartial tribunal will repudiate the charges of oppressions of minorities alleged against the Congress Governments.** To put the Congress in opposition at a time like this and to antagonise public opinion will be the surest way of strengthening its hold on the country and weakening the moral case of Britain at the bar of history. While responding to the reasonable demands of the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji may be attended with certain risks, not responding to them will be attended with greater risks.

CULTURE NOT NATIONAL*

We are meeting at a time of great urgency for discussing a problem of the utmost importance. History is being re-made and the world will not be the same if the war continued for another year or two. What we will make of our country, what will be our contribution to the new order will depend on the aims and contents of our educational planning.

What is the national scheme for education? If it means a scheme for the entire nation in all its stages—primary, secondary and university, adult education, women's education, it is not a matter for controversy. Every progressive country of the world makes provisions for such a plan. The poverty and the backwardness of our country and the incidence of political subjection are responsible for the widespread illiteracy of our population, and the limitation of our higher and technological education. With the slow transfer of responsibility to the leaders of the people the question of education is assuming more importance, and its rapid spread cannot be checked.

We have met here to confer, deliberate and frame proposals for the consideration of those in power and authority. But no educational system can do its duty either to society or its pupils if it has not a clear percep-

* Presidential Address at the All-India Education Conference, Lucknow, 27th December 1939.

tion of what it is aiming at, what it is setting out to teach, what things it considers its citizens ought to know ; otherwise what we teach will be both pointless and wasteful.

There is nothing national with regard to education. The different countries are provinces of a common republic of culture. There is no such thing as proletarian mathematics or Nazi chemistry or Jewish physics. Culture is international, science is cosmopolitan in its essence and reality ; its range and area are universal and not partisan or national. A piece of scientific research may include contributions from workers in Japan, America and Germany.

Above all Politics

If we leave aside the quasi-intellectuals who are under servitude to political propaganda, we will find that the authentic writer, artist and scientific worker are the lords of mankind, the aristocrats of the human community who work under no man's direction, who have nothing above them under heaven, who are subject only to inner necessity to do the utmost that is in them.

In education we are above all politics. The fundamental principles of human development are everywhere the same. If in any particular country or population we have a large number of mental defectives or seemingly unteachable people, it does not mean a fundamental or local difference in the human mind ; it only means that stupidity has been in power and schools are feeble and futile.

And yet it is possible for us to impart through education a definite bias. The Chinese, the Hindus, the

ancient Spartans, the medieval Scholastics, the Catholics have used education for developing a particular type of human individual. The Nazis, the Fascists, the Bolsheviki and the British aim at producing pupils who will fit into particular social schemes. By artificial methods we turn them into strong nationals. What is the result? The melancholy spectacle of the world to-day with its dementia of national hatreds and the cynical savagery with which nation is turned against nation and millions of young men are ready to kill and get killed.

When God makes a prophet, it is said, He does not unmake the man. So when we are told that we are English or German, Hindus or Moslems, we do not cease to be human beings. Nationalism, whatever may have been its justification in times gone by, is to-day a pernicious creed. The development of rapid means of communications, of telephone and wireless, the motor car and the aeroplane and the changes effected by the industrial revolution require us to look upon the world as a single unit and make a real community of men possible.

The tragedies of the world are due to the persistence of the old habits of living in a new world where they have no meaning. We are told that the Allies are fighting Hitler, as they fought the Kaiser 20 years ago. As the suffering and sacrifice of the last generation did not bring about a saner world the defeat of Hitler to-day is not likely to serve humanity better. The hopes of the present generation are likely to be betrayed again if our vision is limited to defeating the enemy. What we have to fight is not Hitler but a sick, acquisitive society with

its balance of power and unco-ordinated, economic enterprise and unjust social order, where the pride and the prosperity of a few are built upon the shame and subjection of the many, an unjust international order which acquiesces in the degradation of many nations.

Hitler and Stalin are the symptoms of the frustration of individuals in societies and of nations in the world. It is not by treating the spots of the skin that the fevered patient can be cured. If there is not a drastic change in our ways of thought and practice our race may die not of a natural catastrophe or disease, but of the disease of nationalism. Change or perish is the law of life to all her children.

Ills of Nationalism

Are we then to educate our children on this basis of nationalism when we know that history and human psychology tell us that nationalism means that once in every generation the cream of our manhood must be tormented, killed or destroyed morally and mentally ?

I am not saying that there is no place for nationalism. Till the present age the world was a large place, and its people lived in isolated corners. Lack of trade routes and means of transport and primitive economic development help to foster an attitude of hostility to strangers. In such a world of physical barriers, nationalism was a natural necessity and provided scope for the political, social and imaginative life of the people.

India has its geography relating to the land which she occupied and a history dealing with traditions by

which she lives. There are certain things without which we cannot live, and certain values without which we do not care to live. These values determine the life of the country more than heat and cold, more than rivers and mountains. India symbolizes a spirit, a character, a temperament, a destiny. She is not a racial identity or a religious unity, but is that attitude of mind which declares the reality of the unseen, and the call of the spirit. This spiritual pattern has affected all those who have made India their home.

Individual Freedom

According to this ideal the aim of education is the freedom of the human individual, the freedom to think and to adore, to dream and meditate. Life manifests itself in the individual. He is the lamp of the spirit on earth; he loves and suffers, knows sorrows and joys; he forgives and is forgiven; he enjoys the thrills of his victories and suffers the anguish of his failures. In a civilised society the individual must be able to practise his natural virtues of body, mind and spirit.

To serve and protect human creativeness is the end of all education. We are all in different ways trying to earn a livelihood by serving society through woodwork and carpentry or higher mathematics and aeronautics. Our education has been more or less academic, and we are trying to remould it in a more practical way. A widespread basic education requires teachers in arts and crafts and leaders of science and industry, which only a university can provide.

The great function of our educational institutions is to develop and increase the sense of mutual understanding and confidence. Much more than all these is the freedom of the spirit of man. The story of mankind, the drama of his progress from chaos, disorder and barbarism to order, peace and humanity is a most thrilling one. The life of man with its endless varieties of form and spirit, all the different ways in which human nature seems to express itself, its ambitions and adventures, its failures and opportunities through all of which the unconquerable spirit of man, hoping, failing, striving, but generation after generation gaining ground, never giving up the forward struggle is a witness to the creative spirit of man.

It is at the heart of history. Let us hold fast to the anchor of spirit however much the winds may change and the tides ebb and flow.

A CALL TO BRITAIN*

Lord Zetland's statement, though more accommodating than previous ones, is not likely to satisfy Congress leaders.

To postpone the attainment of Dominion Status to an undated future is not helpful. That is what Sir Hugh O'Neill's statement indicates: 'How short or how long a time it will be before India can attain the goal of Indian self-government, it is impossible to predict with certainty.' To argue that India demands complete severance from all association with the rest of the Empire and banishment of the Crown from any place in the Indian constitution is to dogmatise on the very premises of the debate. Gandhiji admits that a Constituent Assembly may vote for Dominion Status or something less even. When the Congress declares that India shall not be a unit within the orbit of British Imperialism, it means that full and free extension of democratic rights to India will change the very character of the Empire. The Congress' objection is to imperialist Britain and not to a democratic British commonwealth.

Lord Zetland makes constitutional advance contingent on unity between Hindus and Muslims. Gandhiji believes that the Constituent Assembly will have failed in its purpose if it does not reconcile communal and

* A statement on the India debate in Parliament, Calcutta, 19th April 1940.

religious oppositions. He makes out that any constitution must protect the interests of minorities and satisfy their legitimate aspirations. It will be a failure of Britain's task in India if the unity of the country is disrupted in any way. It is the common objective of the Congress and the British Government that there should be a free and united India. This is neither the time near the occasion to find out causes for increasing communal tension. Gandhiji repeatedly declares that Swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity is a myth. Surely then, the representatives of India must be given an opportunity to settle this problem.

Right of Self-determination

Lord Zetland admits that Indians should play a vital part in shaping the constitution under which they would live but he feels that the British cannot dissociate themselves from shaping it on account of historical facts. He makes it clear that a constitution is not to be imposed on India but settled by negotiation. The Congress demand to-day is for full self-determination which is undoubtedly the consequence of the British declaration of self-government for India. This self-determination is different in principle from mere consultation with the representatives of the different groups and interests. British difficulty in accepting *in toto* the principles of self-determination is with regard to subjects like Defence and the Princes. I hope Britain will not consider it to be unjust to give self-determination to the Indian people in regard to all subjects of domestic concern and agree to joint determination by British and Indian leaders on matters like

Defence, Foreign Affairs and Princes. There might be temporary reservations regarding them as in the agreements which Britain entered into with the Irish Free State in 1921 and with Egypt in 1922 and these may be subject to periodic revision. Such a solution of complete self-determination in regard to internal matters and joint determination for a period in regard to external matters will help to appease political sections in India, raise Britain's moral prestige in the opinion of the neutral world. If the present deadlock continues and if civil disobedience is started, I shudder to think of the consequences for India, Britain and the world at large. Ways and means how a representative assembly should be convened may be left to a small executive consisting of one representative from each province elected by the legislatures and four representatives representing all Indian States.

EDUCATION, POLITICS AND WAR*

Permit me to thank the authorities of the University, most cordially for their kindness in asking me to address this Convocation of the University of Patna. Benares and Patna have been in close cultural contact for many centuries, and I am happy to say that we are maintaining it even now. Your distinguished Vice-Chancellor is a member of our Court and Council, and we have in the colleges of the Benares Hindu University as many as six hundred students from the province of Behar. It is my fervent wish that the feelings of good neighbourliness between Behar and Benares may be fostered in the years to come.

Patna and its Associations

Though the University of Patna is rather young, your city looks down on many centuries, and has listened to great teachers of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina faiths, and in more recent times, to Muslim and Christian divines. Your province, as its name implies, was full of the *vihāras*, the monasteries, of the Buddhist and the Jaina monks. The great emperor Aśoka had his capital in your city, and from here announced to distant lands his message of *dharma*, or a life of discipline and *ahimsā*, or mercy, to all creation. At a time when the world is overrun by mad despots, when the natural aggressiveness

* An address to the Convocation of the University of Patna on 29th Nov. 1940.

of man, instead of receiving check, is finding increased scope, it is good to be reminded of the ideals of the Buddha—*maitrī* and *karuṇā* : love and mercy.

Your University may be said to inherit a great tradition of human values, a tradition which has been supported by seers of mankind with a singular unanimity. The sages of the Upaniṣads, Buddha, Confucius, Socrates, Jesus and Mohammad, though they belonged to different races and climates, did not speak in diverse tongues. They were agreed that what is most desirable for man is not " the riches of Croesus, or the honours of Caesar, or the power of Nero ". A civilised life is not to be equated with physical strength or material prosperity, political power or commercial success. The easy and pleasant life made possible by science is not the essence of civilisation. We may enjoy all the benefits of science, material wealth and comforts, our trains may start punctually, and we may keep our appointments to the minute, and yet we may be barbarous. Civilisation is a living spirit and not a mechanical apparatus. Centuries before the Christian era, in this city and its neighbourhood dwelt people who lived chiefly on nuts and vegetables, whose clothes were plain and simple, whose amusements few and inexpensive, and whose methods of transport slow and rudimentary ; and yet we cannot deny to them the quality of civilisation, for their inner life was highly developed. Among them were saints whose names we still honour, poets whose works we still cherish, philosophers whose thoughts we still study, men who have raised us to a moral eminence, and who

are now part of that immortal heritage which knows not age or weariness or defeat. Civilisation consists in the exercise of all those powers and faculties which are over and above our mere existence as animal beings. It is the enjoyment of the rarest of man's gifts, the disinterested life, the life of the spirit.

It is not possible for us to cultivate the inner life unless we are raised above physical wants. The importance of this basic principle is understood by those who are working for the better distribution of wealth, and the increasing socialisation of the State. The new economic policies and political arrangements attempt to remove the hindrances to good life but cannot by themselves make it prevail. It is in educational institutions that the youth of the country must be trained to the appreciation of the good life, with its fine and delicate perceptions and desire for the things of the spirit.

False Ideals of Education

But if the world has fallen into wildness, if young men made for joy and happiness, shaped for love, mercy and kindness, are raining hell from the sky on non-combatant populations, innocent women and sleeping children, if they are maiming and mangling, drowning and burning their fellow creatures who happen to be their enemies, the outrages on youth perpetrated in the name of education are largely responsible for this condition. There are many who assume that the child's mind is like wax on which we could stamp any pattern of our devising. Even Plato bases his theory of education on this

assumption, and requires us to soak the young mind with sights and sounds which may sink into the subsoil of its mental life and there remain fixed for ever. He wants young children to look on at a battle so that they might get used to warfare. War was the national industry of Sparta, and so its educationists demanded the utter subordination of the individual to the State in the interests of military efficiency. The Christian churches also trained the youth under their control by giving them their own ideas of duty and patriotism, and often they succeeded in throwing a cloak of religion on the passions and prejudices of men. Many of the educational systems of the European Continent are fixing the youth in attitudes of hatred, violence, bloodlust and uncharitableness to all who are not of their race or political creed. Instead of protecting human nature from vice and error, instead of teaching the youth the mutual dependence of mankind and the need for love and compassion, we spoil human nature and seduce it from its natural love for humanity and virtue. The youth of the world are thus deprived of the heritage of decent living and simple happiness. They do not get a chance to think their own thoughts or have their own dreams.

The Indian Ideal of Education

There is something to be said for the ancient Indian ideal of education which subordinates commercial and military values to the human ones. Its aim is *brahmacharya*, initiation into a disciplined life of spirit, the development of the chastity of mind and body. In every

individual there is a spark of sacred fire, a spark which the passions may defile but cannot put out. It inclines us to the love of the highest virtue. The purpose of education is to help the free growth of the soul. When the young mind is brought into contact with the noblest classics of art and literature, it absorbs their mellow lights, their sacred enthusiasms, their austere patterns. Buddha's ripeness of spirit, Saṃkara's magnificence of mind, are a corrective to our youthful immodesty. They reveal to us not only the littleness and transience of things but the exalted dignity of human nature when seen in the perspective of the eternal. The world is a living, breathing one. Time bears the image of eternity, and all mankind is hewn from the same rock.

The Present Crisis

This spiritual humanism is what we most need today. Great changes in manners and modes of thought have occurred. Science and machinery have wrested from Nature a full provision for human life, and with proper organisation there would no longer be any need for long hours of hard toil or bitter struggle for bread, yet withal there is much fear for the future. It seems too tragic that in a world which is there for us to enjoy, and, which might be made full of happiness for every one, we treat human life with contempt and squander it as recklessly as we throw away material treasure. We have all the power of creation, all the capacity for happiness, all the will for service, natural, intellectual and ethical riches in abundance at our disposal, and of this noble inheritance we have made a fearful thing.

The Deeper Issues of the War

What is the root-cause of it all? Why are wars recurrent phenomena in human history? Why do we have the present holocaust of youth, which threatens to engulf the whole world? Why is it that after centuries of enlightenment we are unable to settle our quarrels in a peaceful manner? Why are we fighting? When we try to analyse the causes of the war, we may limit our attention to the immediate causes, or the remote causes or the deeper ones. If we say that Hitler's unprovoked attack on Poland is the cause of the war, we will not be quite accurate. Even as late as 1931 the Government of Britain declined to support the protest of the Government of the United States against Japan's wanton invasion of China. Since then we have had unprovoked attacks on Ethiopia, Austria, Spain, and Czechoslovakia, Lithuania and Albania. If we go back a little, and look for the causes in the Versailles Treaty, the failure of the League of Nations, and the Disarmament Conference, we do not get to the bottom of it all. If the Versailles Treaty was unjust, it was a treaty imposed by the victors on the vanquished. If the League and the Disarmament Conference failed, it is because the spirit necessary for their success was lacking. The root-causes of the war lie in the undemocratic structure of our society, in a kind of tribal patriotism and a passion for power by which all nations are possessed. Pericles in his funeral oration makes out that Athens is the school of Hellas, and called upon the brave Athenians to die for winning the leadership of Hellas which he refused to share with Sparta. "We have compelled" he says, "every sea and every land to admit

our prowess, and everywhere we have planted memorials of harm to our enemies, of good to our friends. For such a city these men have nobly fought, and they have given their lives to prove their faith in the inviolableness of their city ; let every one of you left alive be willing to suffer as much for Athens." He goes on : "These men held the chastisement of the enemy more dear, and preferred the glorious risk of avenging themselves upon him. And when the hour of battle was at hand, thinking it a finer thing to defend themselves and die than to yield and live, they fled from the word ' dishonour,' but held fast to the noble deed. These men behaved as befits the city. You will be wiser to contemplate day by day the might of your city and become her passionate lovers, letting her grandeur and her glory inspire you to reflect that it was all gained by brave men who knew their duty, by men who, when they failed in any enterprise, did not bereave the city of their virtue, but gave freely the fairest offering within their means, aye, their very bodies to the commonweal, and thus won for themselves unfading praise and a most famous tomb—not that in which lie their bones, but that in which their glory lives in eternal remembrance to be celebrated by every opportunity of word or deed. Of famous men the whole world is the tomb. Do you now emulate these men, and counting happiness as liberty, as courage, do not worry yourselves about the danger of war."

Do we not hear the echo of these ringing words in the British Premier's utterances ? " We shall never stop, never weary, never give in, and our whole people and Empire have vowed themselves to the task of cleansing

Europe from the Nazi pestilence and saving the world from a new Dark Age ; we seek to beat the life and soul out of Hitler and Hitlerism. That alone, that all time, and that to the end." In this tremendous epoch, "England's finest hour", he exhorts Englishmen to accept "blood, and toil, tears and sweat." It seems to be the same story, the same problem, the same fight. The play goes on ; only the actors change and the scales alter. Instead of the leadership of Hellas we have the leadership of the world. Instead of Athens and Sparta we have the Allied and the Axis powers. We are fighting for the good old cause of civilisation and freedom. We are fighting against evil things, said the late Mr. Neville Chamberlain. It is a conflict between the good and the evil, between the graces of civilisation and the rawness of barbarism. But is it all quite so simple ? Why should a great people like the Germans with their magnificent record of achievement and influence in every sphere of intellectual life, literature and philosophy, arts and sciences become the blind followers of a monstrous materialism ? Again, the forces of civilisation won times without number but we are not better off. The evil is still there. Why should we labour, plan and found families if the world will continue to be a jungle where nations like beasts of prey are led by a blind instinct to destroy others on pain of being destroyed by them ? Why should millions of men be called upon to suffer and die just to enable one of the powers to assume the leadership of the world ? Only the greatest of causes, the securing of permanent peace and a world of co-operating nations, can justify the unspeakable agony of our times. If a durable peace and a stable

world are to be built out of the wreckage of this war, we must have a positive conception of the values for which we stand. The fate of the human race depends on its moral strength, and moral power consists here as elsewhere in renunciation and self-limitation. A civilised society is possible only in an ordered community where there is a rule of law before which the poor man and the rich, the weak nation and the strong are equal, which believes that the world belongs to all. In this war, the British appeal to the great ideals of democracy and freedom. Democracy means a system of government which gives ultimate power to the ordinary man, which gives freedom within law to believe, write or say what we please, where government is carried on by free discussion, toleration and national adjustment of conflicting views. The Axis powers challenge these foundations of civilised life. To all right-thinking men, the issues of this war are quite clear. There are some who believe that this war is a conflict between rival imperialisms, and that there is not much difference between the Allies and the Axis powers. But the little difference there is, is vital and important. In the actual world, the distinction between good and evil is not clear-cut. We do not find there black and white, but things imperceptibly shade from one to the other. While the British system has not been consistent with regard to its ideals of democracy and justice, they would be altogether extinguished if the Dictators won. The problem for the politician is a choice of evils, and political wisdom consists in perceiving how much of an evil it is necessary to tolerate lest worse evil befall. There are many injustices in the British system

which are corrupting but that should not betray us into blurring the distinction between unfulfilled justice and a clean negation of justice. Every individual is obliged to choose one rather than the other. Even for those who suffer from the injustices of the British system, the duty is clear. It is to defend the cause of Britain and at the same time assist Britain to remedy the injustices which are manifestly inconsistent with her professed ideals. The failure to live up to these ideals is part of the cause of the present war.

India and Britain

The finest anti-Nazi material is in India, and it is nothing short of a tragedy that she is still mainly unreconciled. If freedom of all people is the aim of this war, as it should be, then those who were conquered in the past must be set free. To win the war will not mean much if it does not remove the great wrongs of the present world. We must demonstrate even to the enemy that we reverence the ideals of justice and freedom which we condemn him for rejecting. British statesmen do not seem to realise sufficiently that new forces are at work which require a new outlook and interpretation. We need not doubt that the present Government contains as high an average of ability as was ever found in a British Cabinet. Its members, however, are fitted more to carry on traditional administration than appreciate new factors or initiate new policies. The Prime Minister, who is bending all his indisputable genius and prodigious energies to the supreme task of winning the war has, in spite of his boldness and vision, become a

specialist and is studiously reticent on the Indian question. The other members belong to an era that has passed. The position of Britain in the world has radically changed. The old policy of slow compromise and fine adjustment is out of date. New, strange, inconsequent forces are at work upsetting the old calculations. Statesmen cast in the old form with their servility to established institutions are not adequate to the new conditions. Those who are in charge of India have the traditional virtues of dignity, honour, efficiency and even selflessness. They are most competent members of traditional Government, but are too firmly set in the old ways to be useful in the new world. They are immensely intelligent but highly insensitive. Otherwise it is impossible to understand a policy which does not countenance the establishment of a popular government, which does not trust the leaders of the people with the task of building up the neglected defences of India, and organising aircraft and shipbuilding industries in the country. The sands are running out. Will British statesmen take courage and give content to the noble phrases they utter, and weld together, in a great democratic federation India and Britain for mutual service and the service of the world?

Justice and Democracy

If the new spirit has not captured the imagination of the British people, if they persist in their old policies, this war will be a sheer disaster to mankind. History reveals to us how wars cannot be avoided, so long as justice is not practised by man to man, by State to State,

unless we accept the principle that the weak have rights against the strong. Unfortunately, however, from early times the powerful exacted what they could and the weak granted what they must. Thucydides reports that when the people of Melos appealed to the Athenians, who had them at their mercy, to spare them, the Athenians would only say, "Of our gods we believe—and of men we know—that by a law of their nature wherever they can rule they will. This law was not made by us, and we are not the first who have acted upon it, we did but inherit it, and we shall bequeath it to all time, and we know that you and all mankind—if you were as strong as we are—would do as we do."* If that is human nature, if success and failure are the sole measures of right and wrong, then every excess of fraud, force, and ruthlessness and cruelty is justified, and we cannot complain if nations play the international game by the rules of power politics. Unless we defeat this mentality we might win the war but we would lose the cause. In a great book—*The City of God*—St. Augustine asks: "Take away justice, and what are the kingdoms of the earth but great bands of robbers?"

Of this war the end will be the beginning. If we are not to drift into another disastrous display of brute force, moral principles must inspire the peacemakers. It will not be easy; for as Senor de Madariago said: "A democracy that goes to war, if beaten, loses its liberty at the hands of its adversary; if victorious, it loses its liberty at its own hands." A democracy cannot wage

* *Thucydides* V. (Jowett's English translation).

war and remain a democracy. It may be said that it gives up its principle only for the duration of the war, and returns to it when victory is won. It is not quite so simple. It would be to take an external and superficial view of democracy, which is a way of life and not a mere political arrangement. We cannot organise for war and yet give full liberty of speech and expression. Herd emotions of fear and anger are bound to be produced, and all the powerful agencies of the press, the radio, and mass demagoguery will be utilised for the ostensible purpose of strengthening the will to victory, and these emotions, sedulously cultivated during the war, are likely to endure after it, and increase the difficulties of peace. It requires a supreme effort of reason and imagination to produce the psychological conditions for a just and enduring peace. If the war is to be won on the battle-fields, the peace must be defended in universities and seats of learning, by priests, prophets and philosophers ; we must train men's minds for a new world where the doctrine of non-violence is not the impracticable dream that it is now supposed to be.

Indian Universities

In the last war, a University Professor of Great Britain, when asked what he was doing when the fight for civilisation was on, replied : " I am the civilisation you are fighting for." Art and literature, science and scholarship, and other creative products of the mind, are the tests of civilisation. Those who share the heritage built up by centuries of industry, of art, of generous emotion, a heritage which knows no frontiers, possess the

civilised mentality. Civilisation is larger than patriotism. It is humanism. In these days of growing physical danger, it is the function of the universities to keep the soul alive. While our governments, central and provincial, are naturally absorbed in the immediate and obvious problems created by the war, and are seemingly indifferent to the less insistent but no less important matters, I hope they will realise that it is in the centres of thought and learning that the great ideas which move humanity spring forth and acquire hands and feet. Our universities must be the Indian nation thinking aloud. Unfortunately most of our teachers are only purveyors of information initiating large numbers into new habits of thinking and feeling by a kind of social drill. To redeem the universities from the charge of commonplaceness we require among their leaders a few creative personalities, a few priests of learning and prophets of spirit.

It is through the universities that we have to maintain and develop community of thought, feeling and practice. There are to-day disturbing signs of the gradual disintegration of our culture, which is the synthetic outcome of the contributions of the various races, religions and communities which have made India their home. India is not merely a geographical unity but a psychological oneness. Whatever creeds we may profess, almost all of us are socially and psychologically one. Respect for parental authority, the joint family system, arranged marriages, and castes as trade guilds, are some of the things found alike among the Hindus and the Muslims. In art and architecture, music and literature,

the interaction of the two communities is manifest. Foreign invasions have not disturbed this psychological homogeneity. Modern ideas of science and criticism are affecting the whole nation, irrespective of communities. The masses of people are un-affected by the squabbles for posts and power in which the aspirants for office of the different communities engage. University men can check the spread of the disintegrating tendencies which thwart India's cultural unity and political integrity.

Our anxiety for freedom is natural. In seeking for it we must also acquire the capacity for it, the discipline—personal and social—without which freedom is a myth. It is in the universities that we are expected to acquire habits of discipline, critical reflection and judgment. There is so much material poured on us through the cheap press and the radio that we must learn to discriminate between information and knowledge. We must try to look beneath the surface of things. Unfortunately the students are acquiring a mob mentality. A few of their leaders, by alternate doses of coaxing and bullying, make the large numbers accept opinions which are more extreme than representative. Instead of thinking for themselves they merely follow the lead of others. A vast mass of emotional unreason has invaded the student world. They are false to the education they have received in the free and generous atmosphere of a university, if they believe only in regimented opinion and blind faith in the leader. Students must be helped to develop healthy public opinion, which fortifies the individual against the herd. He is truly educated who is poor in spirit, humble but true to his convictions.

Let me congratulate you on the success which has attended your efforts. You are entering on another stage of your career, and these are not times when you can expect soft options. Life will be full of difficulties, but if you have profited by your training, you will find opportunities of service and happiness. May I conclude with a stanza of *Asolando*, which was published on the day of Browning's death, for it sets forth the ideal suited to our times ?

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake,
Farewell.

EDUCATION AND SPIRITUAL FREEDOM*

It is a relief in these troubled times for representatives of different nations and cultures to meet in the calm and friendly atmosphere of a conference to discuss the foundations of freedom and a free community. The work of this conference is perhaps difficult to appreciate and its concrete results may not be very obvious, though there is nothing surprising in this, for movements of ideas are generally slow and not striking at first sight.

I

No one can deny that we are living in critical times. We see the grave dangers that surround mankind in spite of the great advance that civilisation has made. The discoveries of applied science, the cinema and the wireless, the inventions of the turbine, the internal combustion engine and the aerofoil which helped us to realise the dream of ages, the conquest of the air, have brought about changes which are almost bewildering. Even in regard to human daring and physical endurance, there has not been any falling off. We see every year fresh records established in games and sport, in automobile races and aerial flights. It is also true that young men today are filled with public spirit and social purpose. When we turn to the bulk of the human population there is considerable advance in education and above all in the

* Based on a stenographic report of a speech at the World Education Conference, Cheltenham, 1937.

desire for it. There is wide knowledge, much intelligent interest and abundant goodwill. And yet the collapse of civilisation has become, to an increasing number of thoughtful men, more and more of a probable event. There is a sense of failure, a sense of imminent peril. The menace of war hangs over the world. The great powers are engaged in a competition of armaments and a race towards war. The civilised countries are concentrating all their efforts, mobilising all their resources for a single end, destruction, though it is called defence. Humanity seems to be caught in a net from which it is struggling hard to escape but seems, after years of effort, unable to save itself. We seem to be in the grip of some unseen power which is driving us on to destruction, a power which we are finding it difficult to overcome. We mean well but do so badly. The force of Voltaire's witticism, that this particular planet of ours is the lunatic asylum of the universe, strikes one more than ever today. The insanity which prevents anything being done to bring peace and order to the prevailing chaos seems to be nearly universal and complete.

It is no use shaking our fists at the stars; the fault is in ourselves. The present situation is the material expression of an attitude of mind. Traditional obstinacies, uncontrolled ambitions of military despotisms and the pusillanimity of the great powers reduce all the efforts of the peace-loving to futility. Though we have the desire for peace, a full knowledge of the disastrous character of another war, the will for peace with an adequate realisation of its implications is not there. All our troubles can be traced to a twist which

education, amongst others, has given to our minds, to the fictions and false hopes which are imposed on us. There is a profound maladjustment, a vice in the constitution of organised society, something unjust within national States, and anarchical in their relations to one another. Society is sick because the soul of man is infected with the germs of greed and selfishness. We should not mistake the effect for the cause. If we denounce wars, we must set our face against the conditions of which wars are the consequence. Competitive pride is the root of the problem, the supreme evil. To do the other fellow down has been with us for ages, disguised under fine symbols, national and religious. Only when it is removed will hope be reborn in the world and happiness secured for the future generations. We want a new method of life. Attempts to secure peace by political arrangements at best postpone but cannot prevent the crises. The world is not safe for peace until we bring about a change in the heart and mind of man, until we get a sufficient number of individuals to work for a just and free society, until we make the world a fellowship of free persons.

II

What is a free society? England is said to be a free country, where every one may express his views, at least in the Hyde Park Corner, dine at the Ritz, or dance at the Dorchester, send his children to Eton and Harrow or Oxford and Cambridge, own a Rolls Royce and spend his holidays in the South of France. Assuming that this is the meaning of freedom, can we say that these opportunities

are actually available for the millions of this country? Do its people possess equal opportunities of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? These are the privilege of the few and not the possession of the many. It is argued that we have a free society in the sense that individuals and nations are at liberty to compete with one another and help themselves to the fruits of their competitive struggle. A social order which makes every man and every nation a wolf to its fellows is not a free one. The freedom which human beings desire is not the unreal negative absence of restraint, but the real positive freedom to use to the full one's natural endowments of physique and brains. A free society is one where each individual has real freedom to live as he will, short of infringing on the equal freedom of others to do the same. The so-called freedom which now prevails means slavery to others.

The basis of freedom is the dignity of human personality. No individual is to be regarded as a mean or a chattel. Every individual, by virtue of his humanity, irrespective of colour or race, is an end in himself and cannot be regarded only as a means for purposes extraneous to himself. A free society is one which provides each individual with economic security, intellectual life, and spiritual freedom.

No man can be said to be free if his desire for food, shelter and economic security is not satisfied. Primitive man had to fight for life, had to struggle for food and defend himself against animals. So long as man is called upon to fight for bare physical necessities, physical life

will seem to him to be all-important and his true image will become dimmed. Though the human being has many functions of which the economic is only one, however important it may be, it will dominate the whole course of life, if it is not satisfactorily fulfilled. Today man has no need to struggle for food, clothing and shelter. Science and industry have made it possible for all mankind to satisfy their normal appetites without any encroachment on their fellows. While we are capable of producing abundance for all, we are living in an economic organisation which induces in the large majority of people a feeling of fear and insecurity which is the root-cause of civil strife and national obsessions. The present economic order is the very negation of humility and love, and a free society should be a more balanced and humane order providing every man and woman freely with the essentials of life and thus freeing the mind in part from other tasks. Society is always in danger of splitting to pieces, if the few who have the benefits of civilisation do not share them with the rest and assume that there is no social problem so long as their own interests are secured.

Man does not live by bread alone. Freedom of intellect, of thought, expression and association is an essential element of a free life. If we are to be able to cope with the changing conditions of life, we must have full freedom to think new ideas, make experiments and correct current errors. We may have the liberty to say even to the highest and most exalted authority that he may be wrong or that it is possible to hold views different from his. Life will become intolerable if each

man thinks alike and acts alike. Diversity is in the constitution of things and to suppress it is to dehumanise the world. Yet religious and political organisations demand absolute conformity. In the interests of effective action, they make society into a heartless machine and man an automaton. We are called upon to close our eyes, to stifle our reason, to repeat catchwords and to take sides. Society becomes a vast prison whose activities wound us in every fibre, where we dare not call our souls our own. The fantastic theories of religion and politics which compel us to come into the groups and coerce us at the point of a revolver into a 'higher freedom', do violence to the very nature of man. All that is precious in human society depends on the development of the individual mind. Life where thought and feeling, utterance and action are enforced is not a man's life. All that is organic is crushed by mechanical thought which gives power to the most empty mind. The tyrannies of old times were at least limited in character. They left large tracts of life for the individual's adventure. Modern dictatorships sit in the very citadel of the soul and determine even the details of singing and dancing! All this is done in the name of the country, and its expansion. While the need for conquest has gone by, the instinct for conquest remains. It is an atavistic survival from a time when the physical needs of man could not be satisfied, without recourse to rapine and conquest. These survivals and sadistic impulses are organised by the dictatorships which adopt the conscription of minds as well as of bodies and make machines of men. The delicate balance between freedom and restraint,

between self-expression and social duty is difficult to attain, but that is no justification for tyranny or license. A balance of liberties, an organised harmony of individual freedoms is the ideal. Unrestricted freedom, whether of the individual, or of a class or of even a nation, as we are slowly coming to recognise, is a danger for other individuals, for other classes, for other nations and so for the whole community. Here as elsewhere the truth lies in the union of opposites, in a reconciling synthesis. We should strive for a socialised individualism and a world community of free States. A free society is one in which economic security is provided for all and freedom of thought and action is permitted within the limits of a reasonable social harmony.

Even these, economic well-being and intellectual life and variety, are the conditions of freedom which is in essence the freedom of the spirit. We may acquire greater power over the universe, produce greater abundance of wealth, get rid of physical suffering and obtain more leisure and yet the world will be a dull inhuman one until we recover contact with the sources of life and realise that unilluminated knowledge is no knowledge at all. So long as we believe that there is no reality but the outward, man is a selfish individual and passion's slave, the victim of fear, greed and malice and only by force can he be trained to accept social obligations.

The facts, however, are otherwise and do not support the atomistic conception of society. Normally man is not fully conscious of his own self. There is in him a hidden being which haunts him like a ghost and is an

essential part of his life. We feel certain powers moving within us, we know not what, we know not why. We are conscious of the reality of an abounding inner life, which transcends the conscious flow. All great art arises from the depths of the spirit and not the conscious mind ; all great heroism is far beyond conscious rectitude. They produce in us not a thrill of the senses, not a state of nerves, but a sense of escape from our little selves, of participation in universal life. In their pure forms, art and literature, philosophy and religion are consecrated to the service of a high impersonal spirit, tending to a union ever more intimate with.

“ Our only true, deep buried selves
Being one with which we are one with
the whole world.”

Man is one with the whole world, we belong to each other. “Heaven lies about us in our infancy.” Heaven or oneness with the whole world in love and fellowship is the central fact. This natural goodness and sociability are not completely destroyed even when our nature is heated by passion. Tenderness is normal to human species, if no unnatural strain is put upon it. Between man and society there exists such a deep, mysterious, primordial relationship, a concrete interdependence, that a divorce between them is impossible. This natural sympathy is countered by the unnatural selfishness of individuals and the egotism of collectivities. False racial habits, wrong social compulsions restrict the universal feeling and outlook. Only when we gain a deeper sense of the life we have been cheated out of by burdensome

racial prejudices and national egotisms will we gain relief from our present ineptness in living and realise that the universe is all of a piece. The spirit in man is one with the soul of all things. We cannot run away from this oneness even if we go astray. For those who have gained this vision, the supremacy of a world commonwealth is an ordinance of Providence.

Man is a spark of spirit, a child of God. When the Hindu thinkers speak of bondage as due to *māyā* or the Christians trace it to the Fall, they are referring to the one fact of man's alienation from his deeper being, from the true source of life, to the fall from the centre to the circumference. He suffers a tragic destiny when he is immersed in a world of nature. He is tempted to repudiate the divine source of life and feels himself a natural being, a child of the world. Man is at once God's potential image and his potential antithesis. As such he is free to turn away from God for the sake of his self-affirmation. Though capable of lifting himself to the divine status, the individual craves for an independent assertion. This fall from the divine, this act of separation results in a disruption of the inner unity. The nature of man becomes a wild chaos. Yet on account of the presence and operation of the divine principle, there is in it still a potential unity. This spiritual centre or formative principle prevents the dissolution of the self, by organising its contents to law and order. Complete harmony can take place only when there is a return to unity. Man always has been and still remains a dual being, participating in two worlds, the higher, the divine, the free world and the lower, the natural and the determined in which he is

immersed. He shares the destiny of the latter which acts upon him and binds him so that his consciousness becomes obscured and his higher nature forgotten. This duality, this dependence on natural necessity and kinship with the divine reality sets the stamp of its law upon him. Man becomes so accustomed to this world that he finds it difficult to break through its crust and reach that primal state of human consciousness in which no such division exists. The task which man has to fulfil in a deliberate and self-conscious way is to liberate his spirit from the depths of nature, to affirm the spiritual purity and priority of human nature and to deny its origin in a lower, non-human environment. The ordinary life we live conforming to convention, obeying custom, listening to public opinion, passively accepting a code from others, is a kind of slavery though of an epidemic character. Automatism takes the place of authentic being. We tend to forget the inscrutable and invincible preference of the mind for the infinite. And this—worldly life acts like a dope or an intoxication leading to a disintegration of the unique, making us afraid to be ourselves. We are bound by the chains of our own fears and suspicions to a routine life. They fall like a shadow shutting us from our own reality. We must break the old moulds of thought and free ourselves from fear. The most difficult thing in life is to be oneself. It alone constitutes the freedom of man, the light and life of the world. It is the destiny of man. The fight for it is the supreme issue. Its presence or absence makes society open or closed, free or bound, human or mechanical. It is basic to a free society and its denial will sterilise the whole civilisation. No loyalty

to it can be too firm and no sacrifice too great. Bondage is the fall into division and freedom resurrection into unity.

III

The belief has been a persistent one that the State has the right and duty to determine the kind of citizen it requires and direct its education so as to produce men in a certain mould. At one time the State wanted Clerks in Holy Orders to serve the Church and administer the State. Science and statesmanship, business and industry became important later, and, till the other day, progressive countries adopted these aims for their educational systems. There are States today, which glorify militarism and train the young for rapacious and predatory careers. They give to nations the frenzy of sects. To remake the disintegrating society, we want, not merely clerics, or upper-class English gentlemen, honest businessmen, adventurous explorers or ardent patriots with the love of battle, but humanists with vision, courage and generosity. The end of education is self-knowledge, in so far as the self is a calm discriminating spirit. When we know the inner man, not as a Teuton or a Gaul, not as a soldier or a priest, not as a member of the hungry proletariat or the class of bourgeoisie but as a man facing what is permanent in the world, are we truly human. Our education should confirm the spontaneous aims and ambitions of the child mind which identifies itself with the whole of humanity, if false education does not interfere with these natural impulses. Where are the educators today who are not

merely preachers of opinions or fitters of tools but makers of men ?

If we are to train the youth of a free society, we must teach them not only one role, the obligations and rights of individuals, but their meaning and value for life. Every system of education aims at physical health and efficiency, intellectual alertness and learning, and guidance of the soul, including the education of the emotions and imagination. What matters in any system of education is the accent. Hitherto we have laid stress on learning rather than on life, on intellectual development rather than on spiritual growth. Expansion of the surface consciousness is not a deepening of life. By excessive specialisation and insistence on the outer, the measurable, the quantitative, we tend to extinguish every spark of that light by which man is truly man. Thrown back on himself, he is overwhelmed by fear and loneliness, and imagines gods and spirits who torment him. Clever adventurers exploit his credulity and ignorance for their own ends. But the growth of the scientific outlook makes the acceptance of crude religions impossible. The spread of scientific positivism with its assimilation of man to nature, and the ineffectiveness of religions which lose themselves in dreams of the supernatural, have combined to discredit religion and produce spiritual despondency which under the name of *acedia* was accounted one of the seven deadly sins during the Middle Ages. The onesided development is responsible not only for social hysteria but for emotional instability and nervous disorders.

There are those who give to science the prestige which religion has lost. Its prophets see no limits to the progress that can be achieved by it. In all periods of enlightenment, it so happens that self-confident human reason ignores the mysteries of life and belittles all venerated institutions and beliefs. Man is equated with a system of natural forces. We are little worms, clever worms perhaps, parasitic, unimportant nervous clods occupied with trifles. We seem to live to no purpose, and we do not know where we are going, how and why. We are creatures of a day, and the strivings which will perish with us are of no avail. Life, as a French writer has it, is an epileptic fit between two nothings. If the hope of compensation hereafter is a doubtful one, we can gain immortality this side of the grave, by adopting and accomplishing that larger social purpose which outlasts many generations of mortal men and dignifies individual effort. Consecration to serious purpose gives peace of mind. Russia is not the first country to adopt the technique of calling upon the individual to surrender his life to a movement and a purpose beyond himself, to obtain inward peace. The blinds are drawn down over the windows of heaven and men grow hard, positive and mechanical. Poetry and religion are for old women and it is for men to become motor-drivers and electrical engineers. Social progress and engineering take the place of religion. The finer spirits are oppressed by the emptiness of life and possess a feeling of frustration, a sense of deficiency in dignity and depth. The restless young men whose existence has become pointless, whose allegiance is unpledged, are taken hold of by dictators

who presume to give a meaning to their lives, a value to their existence. They are the leaders of hosts. The conviction of victory with which they imbue their followers is built upon religious elements. "I will tread the path," said Hitler the other day, "which Providence has set out for me with the certainty of a somnambulist."¹ A faith in authority and a reverence for symbols grow up. The conventional religion is a *detour*, a roundabout way while mystic patriotism is the straightest and shortest road to salvation. In this atmosphere we grow up cold and callous, with our sight spoiled and values confused. All vacant minds tend to extreme opinion. We ignore the true and intrinsic worth of men and are dazzled by the outer advantages of power and position. We lose the native sense of community and are afraid of our neighbours. Many vague cults have arisen today exploiting the credulity of man, as in the period after the Napoleonic wars.

The condition of our times is similar to the India of Buddha or the Greece of Pericles with its weakening of traditional authority and rise of self-conscious egoism.

1. The Rich youth leader Her Baldur von Schirach, at a Hitler youth camp in the Bavarian Alps on Sunday, replying to reproaches that his organisation was 'godless' said: "One cannot be a good German and at the same time deny God, but an avowal of faith in the eternal Germany is at the same time an avowal of faith in the eternal God. For us, the service of Germany is the service of God. If we act as true Germans, we act according to the laws of God. Whoever serves Adolf Hitler, the Führer, serves Germany, and whoever serves Germany serves God." (*The Times*, 29th July 1936).

If we are not to fall away into the subjectivism and anarchy of thought and morals of the Sophists, we have to attain to the spiritual individualism and freedom of a Buddha or a Socrates. If we are to launch the world afresh, we must set up a new ideal of spiritual life. The scattered elements of knowledge and the detached specialism require the subtle alchemy of spirit to transform them into wisdom.

The aim of education in India has been initiation into the higher life of spirit. The student is a wayfarer in spirit (*brahmachāri*) and the period of studentship is life in spirit (*brahmacharya*). Education should be an abiding witness to the things of the spirit. "Wisdom is the breath of the power of God and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty."¹ Wisdom is not knowledge. It is practical realisation. In the *Chāndogya Upanishad* Nārada confesses to Sanatkumāra that though he knows all the branches of learning, he is yet sorrowful: "I am merely a knower of texts (*mantravid*), not a knower of self (*ātmavid*). Sorrowful am I, Sir, do you kindly make me cross over to the other side of sorrow."²

The supreme wisdom (*jñāna*) is the result of learning (*vidyā*), reflection (*chintā*), and austerity (*tapas*).³ Centuries ago we were furnished with a formula simple and yet far-reaching, the command to love our neighbours, and yet very few have tried to obey it. It has remained

1. *Wisdom* VII. 25.

2. VII. 1. 3-4.

3. *Maitrāyaṇi Upanishad*.

a casual opinion beside the mass of selfishness. The ill-breeding of the mind blocked the way to its realisation.

The raw materials of humanity, the youth of the world, come into the hands of educators with innocence and eager curiosity, with natural reverence and hope, and a craving for fellowship always half-unconscious, and we twist them out of shape by hammering into their heads lies, illusions and darkness. It is these that have to be unlearned today if young men are to be prepared for a free society. These have to be overcome by training. We require a change of mind and heart. When psychologists speak of complexes, they refer to the mental and emotional dispositions, which though conscious are not products of conscious judgments. True knowledge is not information which can be conveyed from mind to mind, but a state of personality to be created by oneself. An intellectual opinion is not a spiritual experience. Thoughts become our own through discipline, which requires us to renounce not external things but hatred and envy, jealousy and revenge. True wisdom is the freedom of the intellect, the sanctity of the soul. The educator must not do anything to interfere with the unity, friendliness and humanity of the child-mind. Children tell no lies, they do no wrong. Their acts express their minds freely and spontaneously. We have lost that unity, that virginal outlook. Those who have struggled to overcome their passions can understand the efforts and failures of others. The true mark of excellence is the harmony of thought, feeling and will. The aim of spiritual education is to make the outward and inward man one. Only then is life at peace with itself.

Meditation and self-control are necessary for achieving this. The perfection of a human being differs from that of an instrument or a machine. The latter is judged by its capacity to produce certain goods which are external to it, by its speed and efficiency in its productivity. Yet speed has become a cult in every form of activity, including the social and the spiritual. Yet we know that if we run at full speed, our head will cease to think and our heart to feel. Though today human life and civilisation are judged by the same standards of energy and efficiency, and are dismissed as worthless if their wheels are not turning, the great teachers of the world are united in thinking that the growth of the soul is effected in moments of leisure and meditation. In the words of the Preacher, "The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure and he that hath little business, shall become wise." Aristotle observes that we work in order that we may have leisure and that the higher good is not the joy in work but the joy in contemplation. Jesus exalts the wisdom of Mary over that of Martha and affirms that the attainment of the beatific vision is the fulfilment of man's life, and the path to it is a wise receptivity. "Come ye apart into a desert place and rest a while", not din and dissipation but quiet meditation. God gives himself to the pure in heart. He asks for nothing but attention, and it is not easy.

It is quite true that some of the ascetics of the East and the monastics of medieval Europe abused their leisure and justified Voltaire's gibe on the lazy friar who "had made a vow to God to live at our expense". Leisure is for the pursuit of spiritual ends, for the employment

of the mind in the search of truth, beauty and perfection, for establishing a sensible contact with eternal values, which lift us above ourselves and make us feel that whatever may happen to our little selves, life is worth living. It is through meditation that we draw ourselves inward into the depths of our being, renew the tired heart, inspire the fatigued mind and refresh the spirit. If we devote 15 minutes a day to the cult of the body, cannot we devote 15 minutes a day to the cult of the soul? If our education is not to remain a mere decoration, a showy exhibit with no roots, if it is to be real, giving us steadiness in the hour of trial, courage to live our own life independent of the opinion of the crowd, it has to be absorbed in these silent moments. We will know how to live only if we learn how to rest.

Those who are enabled to get behind the intellectual layers of consciousness to the depth of spirit will see the relativity of all national values and narrow enthusiasms. They will welcome the ever-widening scientific vision to which the world is daily becoming smaller and smaller. Earth, water and air which envelop us all are devised by nature to hold us together. If we get rid of our crazy patriotisms, we can co-operate on the scientific basis for the welfare of mankind by strengthening the social, cultural and political links so that we will feel everywhere at home wherever there are men to strive and suffer.

Man is made for peace and co-operation, and war-mindedness is a mental disease, a thing of shame and degradation; which must be banished from the earth for

“ He hath made of one blood all the races of men”. The immense influence which religions exert, in spite of the attacks of criticism and free thought since the days of Lucretius and Lucian, is due to their insistence on the social character of man. They hold up the vision of a golden age which inspires its adherents with hope, courage and strength and aids the development of the highest human possibilities. Even in primitive religion, it is the socially useful acts of life that are consecrated. Those individuals who refuse to play the social part are condemned. The essential acts of social life, birth, education, marriage, are all sanctified by religious rites.

Unfortunately our traditional theologies with their false finalities are not of much help today. True religion takes its stand on the positive fulness of existence, though theologies which claim to represent it are exclusive and particularist. These latter which once caused men to be tortured on the rack or burnt at the stake are today standing in the way of the spiritual integration of the world. They assume that the principle of neighbourly love refers only to one's co-religionists, and acts of hostility are perfectly justified with regard to others. This is not religion, but politics disguised as religion. When it is urged that Socrates declared, “I am not a citizen of Athens or of Greece but a citizen of the world”, and the prophets like Jesus and Buddha made no distinction between the Jew and the Gentile, the Greek and the Barbarian, they naively tell us that the Kingdom of God which recognises no such distinctions does not belong to this world. Thus they misdirect their fellows and lead

them to egotism, individual and national, racial and economic. No wonder those who believe in the reality of spiritual life which cannot be adequately expressed in any translation into human words; and affirm the solidarity of the human race, are tempted to regard conventional religions as opiates and the unthinking take to them as they take to drink for relief from the pains and conflicts of the world. True religion affirms that the image of God is in each man, whatever may be his race or sect. It is founded on self-knowledge and not on knowledge of some other self, even though that self may be a Buddha or a Christ, on delicate sincerity and not imitative energy. Genuine spirituality goes beyond all religious denominations and demands a humanisation or spiritualisation of the world in all its aspects. Spiritual awareness and social harmony are the two sides of a free society. The sense of human need is there and the teacher can satisfy it by giving to the youth an idea of the fundamental power and worth of man, his spiritual dignity as man, a supra-national culture and an allembracing humanity.

TRUTH ALONE CONQUERS NOT FALSEHOOD

Is it not possible even now, when the great powers are unvanquished and afraid of each other's might to cry halt and set up a Congress of nations in which all the neutrals and belligerents take their place and frame a structure of the world which will redress the blunders and barbarisms for which we have been responsible and be fair to the generations yet unborn?*

Youngmen, the world over, have little reason to be complacent about the world in which they find themselves. It is so crooked and perverse. In a world rich with natural and human resources, equipped with the most advanced scientific knowledge and industrial technique, with an abundance of goodwill and spirit of sacrifice, men starve, women are tortured and innocent children suffer. The materials for a widespread revolution are ready to hand, ferment of frustration, deep resentment against the existing order, unbounded enthusiasm and energy to do something to improve this sorry state. Young people whose energies are untapped, whose loyalties unguided, whose aspirations ambiguous, provide the opportunity for the political adventurers and social charlatans who proclaim their caprices to be the highest ideals of society and exploit the idealism of youth.

* Presidential address delivered at the Inaugural Conference of the India Youth League, Lahore, 26th February 1941.

The sense of the vast tragedy in which we are involved must give us determination to discover its causes and a resolve to find the remedy. We know that we live in a changing society but we do not know what the outcome of the change will be. This appalling war, with its material and spiritual devastation compels us to reflect on the ideas and ideals which the belligerents represent. The general security and settled framework of the last 100 or 150 years which made thought about the foundations of life and society unnecessary are crumbling down. President Roosevelt speaking at Chicago in November, 1940, said : " We are facing one of the greatest choices in history. It is the continuation of civilisation as we know it *versus* the ultimate destruction of all we have held dear—religion against godlessness ; the idea of justice against force ; moral decency against the firing squad ; courage to speak out, to act *versus* the false lullaby of appeasement." If civilisation as we know it, rests on these firm foundations of religion, justice, moral decency and courage of conviction, how is it that out of this noble civilisation has sprung this sudden colossal outburst of brute force and godlessness wholly contemptuous of reason, of morals and of law ? How does such a pure and blameless world give birth to its direct opposite ? After all this "civilisation as we know it" is as much the creation of Germany and Italy as of Britain and America. The historic achievements of the past will include such great names as those of Dante and Goethe, Kant and Hesel, Bach and Beethoven.

Are we to comfort ourselves with the Spenglerian view that civilisations, however great they may be like living organisms, have their own inherent life-span and are compelled to pass within a definite period, from birth through growth and senescence to death. It is a great infirmity of the human mind to ascribe its own failure to the operation of forces which are beyond human control. It is highly flattering to our purposelessness to believe that our exertions are futile and the decline of our civilisation is the inevitable effect of cosmic destiny.

If religion tells us anything, it is that we must have faith in the reality of the creative spark which is instinct in ourselves. If we kindle it and fan it into a flame, the stars in their courses cannot defeat our effort to gain the goal of our endeavours. Wars and revolutions are not like floods and eclipses. They are the outcome of men's passions and their ways of living. The determining forces are the dreams and ideals, the imaginative patterns, the individual and collective myths which steer our wills. The application of the individualistic philosophy that, if every one struggles to get all he can in his own way, the maximum happiness of the whole is secured, has resulted, after the advent of the machine technique and the development of the power production, in a mal-distribution of wealth and opportunity and mass unemployment. Since we have not planned for the re-integration of the unemployed into the national community by other means than the distribution of doles in democracies and organisation of war

in dictatorships, since there has not been a sufficient development of social intelligence and morality, we are fostering social dis-integration and world revolution. Besides the growth of industrialism which makes for a universal commonwealth is poured into the rigid mould of a narrow national state and when the powerful national states aim at the economic domination of the world, conflicts are inevitable and in our age such conflicts involve mechanical, chemical, naval and aerial warfare. War is really devil's work and cannot be deleted from the pages of history until national isolation and selfishness are abandoned.

Wasteful Tragedy

The conflict to-day is not between 'civilisation as we know it' and its opposite, or between democracy and dictatorship or between Great Britain and America on the one side and Germany and Italy on the other. It is between two contrasted ideas of human society, that of supposed superior races claiming dominance by virtue of a natural law alleged to be above the common ideas of right and wrong and the other, that of an international society seeking the life of peace in conformity with law and justice. We cannot say that any nation is free from responsibility for this war. No nation has a right to be self-righteous. From the time of the application of gun powder to the art of war, the relations of the white and the coloured peoples, of the rich and the poor have been unrighteous. If the perpetuation of these injustices is all that we are fighting for, if racial discrimination and economic inequalities are all that we have to offer

as a "New World," then this war is an utterly wasteful tragedy.

In spite of the ambiguities of the British policy and inconsistencies in her conduct, some of her bolder statesmen make us believe that Britain is fighting to keep open the opportunity of making civilisation increasingly just and against a system ruthlessly opposed to any such enterprise. It is yet open to her to make clear to the world by her deed that the issue at stake is freedom for all individuals and nations. The objective of building a genuine world based on the ideas of truth and justice must become an organic part of the war effort.

The spirit of hate and technique of terror are on the increase. The most powerful nations of the world are proclaiming their purposes to fight to a finish. It will mean, if carried out, the crumbling of all human values and a world revolution. We know what happened in the last war.

Hostilities were abandoned in November 1918, when it was understood that the fourteen points of President Wilson's address of 8th February 1918 would be the basis of the peace. Germany who had cast down her arms, and turned out the Kaiser, was compelled to put her signature to the confession of her guilt, to give up whatever territories were claimed by the Allies and their allies, promise heaps of gold which she had not and returned home brooding on the meanness of man and revenge. The peace, especially its economic clauses, breathed the spirit of conquest and the policy of the later years produced the mood that created Hitler. Have we learnt nothing

from all this? If this war continues to the bitter end, reckless of the cost of human misery, waste and shame, the victors, whoever they may be, are not likely to be the pioneers of that better order for which we hope. Is it not possible even now, when the great powers are unvanquished and afraid of each other's might to cry halt and set up a Congress of nations in which all the neutrals and belligerents take their place and frame a structure of the world which will redress the blunders and barbarisms for which we have been responsible and be fair to the generations yet unborn? Other wrongs besides those resulting from Nazi aggression, other untreated questions, colonial responsibilities shall be open for settlement at the Conference. If there are matters on which no agreement can be reached, they shall be referred to a Court of Enquiry formed from neutral nations, for no one could be judged in his own case. We can hope for peace only if we realise that all human beings are men of like passions with ourselves, that we have all been guilty in the past, and for the future we are partners in the common enterprise of civilisation. The political unification of the world is bound to come. Need it come by the decisive victory of a single power to the annihilation of all the rest? Can it not be brought about by the voluntary union of nation states? Peace, at the present moment, when vision is blinded and judgment distorted, may seem utopian but "Utopias", said Kant, "are sweet dreams, but to strive relentlessly towards them is the duty of the citizen and of the statesman as well."

Newness of Life

This newness of life must spring from men's hearts. We must acquire faith in the common humanity, the faith which has so often inspired saints and prophets but which has not captured the belief of the great mass of mankind.

However dense, however obstinate, however depraved a human being may be, he is a human being and he can never forfeit entirely his dignity as man. The question before us is what makes for true life—peace or war, love or hatred, persuasion or force, worldiness or renunciation? The burden of India's life, the backbone of her existence is faith in the values of spirit, the conviction that goodness, truth and beauty are alone permanent and a man may throw away the pleasures of life, the possessions of earth as alien things but he is secure so long as his soul is dressed in its proper raiment of rightmindedness, courage, nobility and truth.

A civilisation may have its political arrangement, economic structure, technical equipment but all these are instruments of the spirit, which is the essence of the civilisation, its vital principle, the nerve which feeds and keeps it alive. If the principle perishes, if the nerve is cut, the outer structure may remain apparently sound and free from weakness but the life has gone out of it, its self-renewing power has disappeared and it will decline into decay and death. India for centuries has stood for a spiritual outlook. I am using the word 'spiritual', not religious, for religions are being used to divide us

and the spiritual outlook has influenced the Turk and the Tartar, the British and the Moghul. One spiritual landscape dominates the Hindu, the Muslim, the Sikh and the Christian. Life and experience are more important than dogma and revelation. We are great not by what we believe but by what we are.

Some of our smart and unbelieving youngmen scoff at these views and sap the foundations of belief. They are attracted by the high pressure machine civilisation and implore us by threats and intimidation or coaxing and cajoling to put into our Indian bodies Bolshevist or Nazi souls. If the great civilisation which has stood all these centuries, comforting man and kindling his aspiration, if it should disappear, it seems to me that it would die not by murder but by suicide. The present upheaval may open their eyes and make them feel that India's chosen path may yet lead the world to a higher and nobler way. We cannot seek unity through discord, fellowship through hatred of our fellows, social harmony through class conflict. These problems cannot be solved on the plane of desires. Not by wealth, not by progeny but only by renunciation can man attain life eternal. It is the duty of the creative personalities to hold forth the vision and their followers to contrive to carry the large masses with them. For the release of India's awakened soul, political freedom is an absolute necessity. All those who strive to prevent free India from coming to birth, who oppose the drawing together of the different communities, are disloyal to the age-old spirit of India which welcomed even in ancient times different peoples and allowed them absolute freedom to profess their

creeds and practise their codes of conduct. The love of one's country is not more exceptional than love of one's mother. We are not asking for the independence of India for in the post-war world no country will be independent. We are demanding equality and freedom and are ready to co-operate with other nations as a free and equal partner. Communal differences, untouchability and economic inequalities are disturbing the political unity and integrity. The luxurious lives of a few with their easy indifference and selfish indulgence bear a direct relation to the penury and privation of the many. We must aim at a social structure which assures work and security for all able-bodied men, proper education for the young, a better distribution of the necessities and comforts of life and individual freedom for self-development.

The leaders of the young to-day have a great opportunity. If they are rooted in the spirit of this ancient land, they will work for the freedom of India and the welfare of the world in a spirit of tolerance and truth. They will do their best to clear away the mists of ignorance and prejudice and press forward to the goal in the conviction that truth alone conquers, not falsehood. Whatever events may befall us, the light of truth will not go out. Even if our civilisation, as we have known it, is shaken, it will be a secular catastrophe which will help us to grow in wisdom and stature. Let us press forward without fear, without hate, with faith and reverence.

CONFESSION OF MORAL FAILURE OF BRITAIN IN INDIA*

The war in Europe and Africa is assuming a very serious character. There are rumours of impending disturbances in the East, which will threaten the safety of India. It looks as if India will be in the danger zone in a more direct way very soon. The most urgent need in these circumstances is a friendly understanding between Great Britain and India and complete trust of each other. But the estrangement is getting wider and deeper. I say it with the deepest sorrow that there is not visible any imaginative vision or courageous statesmanship among British leaders at this critical hour.

Indians of all shades of political opinion are bitterly opposed to totalitarian creeds. They were very anxious to identify themselves with the democratic cause at the beginning of the war. But when India was declared a belligerent without the consent of her people or her leaders she felt she was only a vassal state required to carry on the dictates of Britain. Gandhiji, the custodian of the conscience of the country made a moral protest; yet in his anxiety not to embarrass Britain he adopted satyagraha with a limited scope. He could have swept the country and instilled into the people a spirit of opposition to the war and non-cooperation with Britain.

* A statement on the Indian debate in the House of Commons, Calcutta, 25th April 1944.

He deferred from doing so since he did not wish to hamper the war effort. There is abundance of good will for Britain and anxiety to stand by her and yet by sheer stupidity and self-will all these moral resources are being wasted to the detriment of both Britain and India.

Communal Problem

The speech of the Secretary of State for India seems to desire a dialectical victory more than a real solution of the complex Indian problem. He refers to the communal problem as the greatest obstacle. No one can deny the reality of it, but it is not necessary to assume that all the political minded Muslims are in sympathy with the extreme and unrepresentative official opinions of the Muslim League. The Muslims of the North-Western Frontier Province and Sind, the Proja Party of Bengal, the Shiahhs, the Momins, the Ahrars and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Congress Muslims among others, are not with Mr. Jinnah. The Premiers of the Punjab and Bengal became members of the Muslim League after their election.

Though nominally members of the League, their policies in the provinces in regard to the war have little in common with the policy of the League. Besides, it must be most mortifying to the true Englishman to find that his work all these decades for building up a united India has come to naught. But he cannot escape the responsibility for the communal cleavages. Some years ago, Mr. Lionel Curtis wrote, regarding separate electorates, that "India will never attain to the unity of nationhood so long as they remain. The longer they

remain the more difficult will it be to uproot them, till in the end they will be only eradicated at the cost of civil war. To enable India to attain nationhood is the trust laid on us and in conceding to the establishment of communal representation we have been false to that trust." The honest Britisher must feel repentent for the mischief he has caused and do his best to undo it even at his late hour.

Treatment to Liberals

The way in which the proposals of the Bombay Conference are treated by the Secretary of State indicates that even in this crisis, Britain is not willing to part with power in India. A cabinet consisting of non-official Indians may not have large political following. But as Gandhiji said, he would accept it as a sign of change of heart in the British rulers. All those who voted for the Poona resolution may be expected to support such a government.

It is not unlikely that Gandhiji may call off his satyagraha reserving to himself and other believers in non-violence the right to preach against wars as such. The Congress Government may get back into power in the provinces. Men like Sir Sikander Hyat Khan and Mr. Fazlul Huq will support such a government. At a time when law and order required to be maintained, Indian Governments in the Centre and the provinces are urgently necessary.

I am distressed that we do not have a Churchill at the India Office, one who had the boldness to proclaim some months ago an Anglo-French Union. Indians must

be made to feel that it is a war waged not for the perpetuation of Indian subjection in the name of minorities and vested interests but for leading mankind into a happy and just order. The statement of the Secretary of State is the confession of the moral failure of Britain in India. It is a sad commentary on the war aims that, where Britain has the power, she is unwilling to use it for the benefit of India and the world. I appeal to the British Prime Minister to face the Indian problem and solve it in an honest way and in a true democratic spirit.

FUNCTION OF UNIVERSITIES

Your Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen : Let me at the outset express to His Highness the Maharaja of Indore our most cordial welcome to this University. By his magnificent grant of Rs. 24,000/- per annum in perpetuity he has increased the indebtedness of this University to the Indore Durbar, which has already given us as early as 1912, a sum of five lacs of rupees. I recall with pleasure that His Highness was a member of the Christ Church in the University of Oxford and this evening we will have the pleasure of welcoming him to the fellowship of the Benares Hindu University. My friend Sir Tej Bahadur, who is on the platform to-day is an honorary graduate of both Oxford and Benares, the two universities with which I happen to be intimately connected at the moment. Well, Oxford represents to most of the Western scholars, the cultural capital of the western world, and has for some centuries attracted eminent savants from all parts of Europe. Benares for a much longer time has attracted pilgrims from all parts of the East. The meeting of the two famous Universities in the person of our generous donor is an indication of the future meeting of the East and the West with which the hope of the future is bound up. He has given this donation for the purpose of developing international fellowship and understanding. You will all agree with me when I say that at the present moment if the world finds itself in this unfortunate

condition, it is due to lack of international understanding. The world has grown physically one. In an aeroplane you can go over it in a week's time. It is also becoming economically interdependent. The political fortunes of the different nations have bearings on each other, and fashions of thought, and modes of art are cutting across national frontiers. In spite of this growing physical and intellectual unity, we are having a sharpening of national antagonisms. Closer physical approximation, greater spiritual disunion, these are the characteristics of the world to-day.

And if we are to remedy these defects, we should look to the universities. Politicians and statesmen try to bring about external reconstruction in political rearrangements and economic remodellings, but they have all proved abortive. They have turned out failures, because the spirit that is essential to make them successful is not there. The temper of mind, which alone can make international unity a success is not to be found among statesmen. The last war was fought for the noble purpose of ending all wars, and for making the world safe for democracy. After it we had world economic conference, the disarmament conference and the League of Nations. Why have they turned out such dismal failures? Why are we having another war on our hands to-day? Why have the hopes of the young men who fought in the last war been betrayed and dashed to the ground?

It is because the spirit of the world community, for which the world desires and craves has not been achieved. In a world which is growing more into a physical whole,

we have a set of 60 and odd independent sovereign states. That is the primary cause for international anarchy and confusion. This war is being fought again, and we are told that it is a war between Democracy and Dictatorship. I should like to pause here for a moment. What do we mean exactly by Democracy and Dictatorship? Dictatorship means the exaltation of the Nation-state and the sacrifice of the individual's soul and mind. Democracy on the other hand means the supremacy or the primacy of the human individual and the recognition that the state is but a means for the protection of the human personality. It does not mean that we are all equal either physically, mentally, or even morally. But we are equal in an essential sense. Every individual has a right to live in this world and aspire to the ardour and dignity of his life. The world has its focus in the individual. Love is experienced by the individual. Truth is revealed to the individual. Every individual would like to live his own life, and share his own responsibilities. There are so many sides in which we are one with others. But in those most intimate personal aspects of our life we are alone. When we cross a point, even the dearest of friends are strangers to one another. Each one has his own joys and sorrows, shudders and ecstasies. This invisible life which is not externalised or objectified is the personal side of every human being. To assist every individual to realise this is the aim of the state. It is the privilege of the human individual to be eccentric, to be un-orthodox, to be non-conformist. Democracy means that the state recognises the individual, irrespective of class, race or nation. Dictatorship exalts the states, and democracy the individual. If

the world is to be built into a human community, this essential principle of democracy—the right of the individual to live his own life—requires to be recognised. The value of the state is judged not by its material wealth or the size of its armaments or the extent of its roads and railways but by the measure to which it contributes to the happiness of the human individuals who compose it. This happiness is independent of the rise and fall of dynasties, or the waxing and waning of states.

Thucydides contemplates the image of a world in which Athens would have ceased to exist. Polybius shows us the conqueror of Carthage meditating over the burning town; “And Rome too shall meet her fateful hour.” King Janaka said, when Mithila burns, “Nothing that is mine is burnt.”

In a university, it is our duty to emphasise these supreme values of the spirit. There is a superiority of the individual over the merely external and the objective. For this, freedom must be granted. If this principle is not accepted I do not suppose that it is possible for us to build a human community in this world. To develop the right psychology, to impart the true vision, is the function of universities.

For achieving that object no higher way could be devised than that which our university has now proposed with the full approval of His Highness, that is to invite every year an eminent scholar or savant, and to ask him to spend about four or five months in the holy city of

Benares, and send also three of our best young men, one in Arts, one in Science, and a third in Technology to foreign countries for further training. These are the steps which the University has adopted for the purpose of implementing the noble desire of our illustrious donor when he made this donation. The first year's contribution is earmarked for the purpose of building a suitable residence for the visiting professors. We requested His Highness to lay the foundation stone, but with characteristic modesty he has excused himself. Our venerable Rector should have done it, but for the fact that he is unable to stand the physical strain in the early hours of the morning. So it is my pleasure to-day to lay the foundation stone of this "Holkar House" which is to be built in this university. And my prayer is that it may be there for a very long time to house the eminent scholars who will visit this University and continue to remind us of the ardent patriotism, abiding love of learning, and essential humanism of our illustrious donor.

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION*

Let me thank most cordially the authorities of the Agra University for their kindness in asking me to address this Convocation. I congratulate the graduates of the year and wish them all happiness. But I do not know whether in the world as it is, it is easy to be happy. We are living in a period of strange moral confusion. University men who are expected to cherish ideals of a better life for mankind, are active in producing destructive and deadly weapons of war. Our libraries and laboratories, our institutes of technical research are utilised for the same purpose. All forces of science and culture are used for the one terrible and tragic end. This appalling condition of the contemporary world, this failure of man is not the decree of fate ; it is the work of man. It is not destiny, but dastardly crime.

As university men, we are not directly concerned with changing the political and economic conditions which are responsible for the war but it is our duty to propagate right ideals. If men make history, ideas make men. What is our objective with regard to the training of youth ? Are we to prepare them for life or for death ? Do we send children to school, young men to colleges to make them behave like beasts of prey ? When we look around and see what is taking place in academic centres, how we are imposing on suggestible youth false ideas, how we are debasing the minds and corrupting the hearts of

* Convocation Address at Agra University, 22nd November 1941.

the young, making them crazy with the lusts of cruelty and power, do we not feel guilty of using the noble instrument of education for ignoble ends? What is our purpose in university education? Is it the Nazi ideal of military efficiency? Is it the Fascist ideals of 'work, obey and fight'? Are we to train the youth for class struggle as the communists demand? Will systems of education based on such ideals help us to create a new and better order of society? The totalitarian states look upon human beings as aimless, drifting, credulous creatures, who without any mind or will of their own can be driven like cattle or moulded like clay by those who appoint themselves as their rulers. We are not taught to use our understanding, but to yield like animals to our instincts and appetites. With loud speakers and savage cries we are carried along. From the time we are born we are brought under the influence of set doctrines. Through years of childhood and adolescence, we are taught to accept the prevailing orthodoxy. Every book suggests it, every paper shouts it, and every cinema gives it visible shape. We are moulded into a uniform pattern. The quality of mind is lowered and we are rendered incapable of sound judgment. What is most vital and creative in us is destroyed and we forget that we have souls. To make us soulless, to degrade us to the level of the animal cannot be the purpose of education.

Ancient Greece and India agree in holding that it is the aim of education to train us to apprehend the eternal values, to appreciate the supreme human virtues and

the simple decencies of life. We must be educated not for cruelty and power but for love and kindness. We must develop the freshness of feeling for nature, the sensitiveness of soul to human need. We must foster the freedom of the mind, the humanity of the heart, the integrity of the individual. Even from the nurseries, we must train human beings by unconscious influence and conscious effort to love truth, beauty and goodness. A famous Church Father in the Middle Ages, Bernard of Clairvaux, in a Latin hymn, asks, "Who will achieve universal peace?" and answers, "The disciplined, the dedicated, the pure in heart and the gentle in spirit". No machinery which the art of man can devise will work unless there is behind it the proper temper of mind. To create and maintain that temper should be the aim of education in a civilised society. Plato had a clear vision of the goal and method of education. Though we may not understand all that we read, by surrounding ourselves with the work of great minds, a touch of their greatness passes on to us winning us "imperceptibly from earliest childhood into resemblance, love and harmony with the beauty of reason". "They sink deeply into the recesses of a soul and take a powerful hold of it. He who has been duly brought up therein will have the keenest eye for defects and, feeling a most just contempt for them, will welcome what is beautiful, and gladly receive it into his soul, and feed on it, and grow to be noble and good; and he will rightly reject and hate all that is ugly, even in his childhood before he has come to the age of reason, and when reason comes, he will welcome her ardently, because this has been his

upbringing".¹ 'There are no mechanical cures for psychological maladies. If the world is suffering from sickness of spirit, we have to cure it. India has her proud heritage and is broadbased on the central culture of mankind. We are not a rootless people deriving a fickle inspiration from transient fashions. We have been taught the transience of mere material wealth and the transcendent importance of the spirit in man. We must vindicate that spirit against the deadweight of circumstance. Indian culture has stood for the ideal of freedom of thought and worship, though there were periods in which allegiance to this ideal was weak and others in which it suffered eclipse. It welcomed the Jews, the Christians, the Parsees and the Muslims. It not only allowed them freedom to practise their rites and forms of belief but provided facilities for doing so. Its essential aim has been the recognition of universal human worth and dignity, of unity amidst diversity, of co-operation despite differences.

We are demanding a more equitable social order. We can achieve it only if we plan our education properly and strive to eliminate the sources of iniquities and injustices. Education is the means for the reconstitution of society. If we are to prepare ourselves for a democratic order, our education must have in view the development of each and every individual, as a producer, as a citizen, as a human being. He must have opportunity to develop to the utmost his innate ability and genius, physical, mental and spiritual.

1. *Republic* 401 f.

Equality of opportunity is the basic principle of democracy and that can be realised only if we have faith in the dignity of the human soul.

The present war is said to be a conflict between democracy and the evil things opposed to it. It is not however a straight struggle between democracy and tyranny, not a clean fight between good and evil, or right and wrong. We will be more correct if we say that it is a conflict between some measure of truth and falsehood, between unfulfilled law and brute force, between the whispers of human conscience and the call of the wild jungle. In the present circumstances the chances of upbuilding this world are bound up with the victory of the Allies. We are directly interested in the triumph of order over chaos, of liberty over enslavement. India therefore is wholeheartedly on the side of Britain, America and Russia in this conflict with Nazism. But if Britain has not been able to mobilise, not the material resources but the moral forces, it is because she is unwilling, even in this critical hour, to apply the principles of democracy to India. It suggests that after all this war is not against Fascism or dictatorship but is for the defence of the British Empire which is a conquering domination of finance, trade and tradition. The love of liberty, which contact with British institutions has bred in us, cannot be torn out of our soul. Political subjection is moral degradation, not only for countries overrun by Hitler but also for countries which are in a dependent position like India. In the last half of the 17th century Leibniz, who lived his best years between two great wars, wrote : " By shameful submission men's minds will be progressively

intimidated and crushed, till they become at last incapable of all feeling. Inured to ill treatment and habituated to bear it patiently, they will end by regarding it as a fatality which they can do nothing but endure. All will go together down the broad high road to slavery." To ask India to fight for Britain simply because the Nazis will be worse is not fair to Britain or to India. Are we to stand up for Britain simply because we must avoid the worse alternative of Nazi despotism? Before it is too late, I hope, Britain will establish her good faith at the bar of history, by implementing her many pledges and declaring that India, not at some undated future but immediately after the war will be a free and equal country in the commonwealth of nations.

Victory over Nazi Germany is not enough. We must win the peace and not lose it as we did in the last war. It will be an utter waste of much material treasure and precious human life, if we revert back to pre-war conditions. All the belligerents speak of a new order but there is no agreement about its character. It must be democratic in an essential sense. It must be a world in which all nations, strong and weak, are free and all races, white and coloured, have opportunity for self-expression and development.

Graduates of the year, you will soon face the cares and anxieties of life. We are intellectually poor, inwardly torn, profoundly uneasy and ignorant of the future. There are forebodings of evil. The bonds that unite us are rudely sundered by politics. We have a small but influential minority of leaders who depend for

their existence on Indian disunity or at any rate profit by it and therefore feel no sort of longing for Indian freedom and unity. Our one purpose should be to see India united, tranquil and gracious with a new way of life. India, impoverished, and harassed, the prey of schism and division, must be raised to a happy and prosperous condition with internal unity and illumination of spirit where youth will have opportunity and age security. We must cut through the confusions created by the short-sighted politicians and the timid careerists who play upon old prejudices. We must strive for the great ideals of economic justice, social equality and political freedom. For them hard work, self-control, and effective propaganda are essential. Our chief weapons are commonsense, sanity and coolness. The universities are here to equip us with them. It does not matter if we fail in our attempt, for the meaning of life is not in accomplishment as in the effort to grow better. We must dare to fail before we can hope to succeed. This age has no parallel for the magnitude of its enterprises for those who would be men and I do hope and pray that you will quit yourselves like men.

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS*

I am grateful to the University authorities for asking me to address this Convocation. Let me congratulate the new graduates on the success they have attained and wish them useful and happy careers in life.

Usually the convocation speaker is expected to exhort the new graduates to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the education they have received at so much expense to themselves and to the State. You will soon be the leaders of the community. What lead would you give to the general community in this shaken and stricken world? It is no use dealing with academic absolutes when the problems uppermost in your minds are the world war and the communal question in India. Whichever of these we think about, we are struck by the failure of man as a political being. We see on all sides littleness, folly, pain and terror. The experience of centuries has not helped us to live together in amity and harmony. The education we receive in our universities seems to have failed of its purpose.

The intellectual content of education is exactly the same whether we belong to Dacca or Durham, Calcutta or Cape Town. What is different is the purpose, the atmosphere, the ideals. It is not what we acquire but how we behave that marks the university man. We

* An address to the Convocation of the University of Dacca, November 1941.

have a good deal of education in the sense of advancement of knowledge and awakening of intelligence but not much education as a guide to life and the service of man. The world is lacking in the inspiration and the power to use the great forces of nature and mind for noble ends. Where there is no vision, the people perish. It is the function of universities to give us the vision, to awaken idealism. Their purpose is to interpret life in its permanent aspects, to give us entry into a region higher than that in which we ordinarily move, to show us the truth that humanity is indivisible in essence and must become indivisible in fact.

The modern world is a unity. Every civilised nation is part of an interdependent whole. The forces by which social life is affected are world-wide in their incidence. If they are to be controlled by human intelligence, that intelligence itself should possess a world-outlook, its range of understanding must be world-wide. The continuance of civilisation depends on the creation of a sufficient number of men and women with minds capable of understanding and directing the world forces.

The principal cause of the great struggle now on, is the exaltation of the national ideal at the expense of the human. We cannot have peace so long as nations do not possess a sense of honesty, courtesy and chivalry. If the war is the nemesis of nationalism gone mad, it is because nations adopted the ideal of the absolute state. But there is nothing in nationalism which is not consonant with the truest international ideal. Internationalism is not a dull, flat, soulless uniformity. Nationalism is an essential step towards internationalism. The

larger outlook does not supersede patriotism but deepens its meaning and extends its range. India to-day asks for national autonomy and not independence which is impossible in the present world which is interdependent.

To develop a united India has been the purpose of all great Indians. Geographically she is marked out as a single country. Even in the old days when the difficulties of transport and communication in such a vast area were immense, there were attempts at political unification. Under the Mauryas and the Guptas, under the Khiljis, Toghluks and Moghuls the country was under one sovereignty. Economically the different parts are interdependent, politically they have now and again been brought under a single sovereignty. If a nation is a body of men and women with their roots in the past and shaped by long historic processes, India is a nation. From early times, great Indian statesmen attempted to weld together the different races, and religions into a harmony on the principle of toleration. It has been the dream of the Mauryas and the Guptas, the Moghuls and the Mahrattas as well as the British. Aśoka's empire included almost the whole of India, Nepal and Kashmir. He did not strive to abolish the variety of races and religions but insisted on toleration and harmony. His policy was not the outcome of religious indifference or political expediency, but was the expression of respect for sincere faith and hatred of bigotry.

It is sometimes argued that the faith of Islam is hostile to the traditional policy of racial and religious fellowship for which the faiths of the Hindus and the

Buddhists are famous. But it is not so. The Quran preaches the spirit of toleration in many of its noble utterances. "Say, we believe in God and that which was revealed unto us, that which was revealed unto Abraham and Ismael and Issac and Jacob and that which Moses and Jesus received and that which the Prophets received from their Lord, we make no distinction between any of them."¹ "Certainly I have sent for every people in the world a prophet (who taught) them to worship God and never to be carried away by passions."² "To every age its own book."³ Again, "There hath never been a nation to whom God hath not sent a prophet."⁴ The Quran admits that it has not dealt with all the prophets, for it says: "We did aforetime send Prophets and Apostles before thee: of them there are some whose story we have related to thee, and some whose story we have not". "O Prophet, I have prescribed a particular form of worship for every group of people which it observes. Men should not, therefore, quarrel about these forms."⁵ According to the authority of their sacred Scripture, the Muslims believe that India too had her messengers sent by God.

Just as it was the state policy of the Hindus and the Buddhists to permit different forms of religious worship and practice, even so Babar advised his son Humayun in his Will:

"O my Son! People of diverse religions inhabit India; and it is a matter of thanksgiving to God that the

1. II. 136.

2. VI. 18.

3. XIII. 38.

4. XXXV. 24.

5. XXII. 67.

King of Kings has entrusted the government of this country to you. It therefore behoves you that :

1. You should not allow religious prejudices to influence your mind. You should administer impartial justice, having due regard to the susceptibilities and religious customs of all sections of the people.

2. In particular refrain from the slaughter of cows which will help you to obtain a hold on the hearts of the people of India. Thus you will bind the people of the land to yourself by ties of gratitude.

3. You should never destroy the places of worship of any community and always be justice-loving so that relations between the King and his subjects may remain cordial and there may be peace and contentment in the land.

6. Treat the different peculiarities of your subjects as the different seasons of the year, so that the body politic may remain free from disease."

Akbar, his grandson inherited the generous traditions of Babar and adopted a liberal policy of justice and fairplay for all races and communities. When Aurangzeb attempted to convert the state into a theocracy, his empire broke up and the rule was transferred to other hands.

The Hindus and the Muslims belong to the same stock. They are distributed, though unevenly, over the whole land. They speak the same language, Bengali in Bengal, Gujarati in Gujerat. As a rule they have respected each other's forms of worship and worked together to

achieve a culture, which is neither Hindu nor Muslim but Indian. In Art and Architecture, in Music and Painting, and even in religion the interaction of the two faiths is manifest. The teachings of Kabir and Nanak, Dadu, Chaitanya and Tukaram and the development of Sufi mysticism, indicate the spirit of harmony in which the leaders of religion worked. In lakhs of villages in India, Hindus and Muslims enjoy the same sports and amusements, participate in each other's festivities and serve the common aims of village life. Even in political struggles, the Hindus and the Muslims had fought in both camps. In the great Indian Mutiny, they fought side by side. All these centuries the followers of the two religions have learned to live in a spirit of amity and concord. Mr. James Forbes, writing about Broach in 1778, observes: "Whatever might have been the animosities between the Hindus and the Mahammadans in the time of Baba Rahman (1078 A.D.) or during subsequent periods it is certain that now the professors of both religions have acquired a habit of looking upon each other with an eye of indulgence unusual in other countries between those who maintain such opposite tenets.'" Hamilton's Gazetteer records (1815) "The two religions have existed together so long that the professors of both have acquired a habit of looking on each other with a tolerance and indulgence unusual in other countries."

The historic role of the British in this country has been to prepare India for a new nationhood. Leading British statesmen and administrators like Munro,

Malcolm, and Elphinstone set before themselves this great ideal. In his famous Minute on Indian Education Macaulay wrote : " It may be that the public of India must expand under our system till it has outgrown our system ; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government ; that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come, I know not. But never will I attempt to retard it or avert it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English History." Educated under this system Indian intellectuals learnt to appreciate the value of political freedom and demanded it. There are critics who contend that our system of education is on wrong lines. That it stands in need of improvement in many directions is unquestioned. But it has created a passion for freedom and unity which is felt throughout the land, irrespective of race, religion or community.

Strange to say we have British statesmen who attempt to " retard " and " avert " the growth of national feeling. Against the higher mind of Britain some of those in power in and over this country got nervous about the steadily growing passion for political freedom and fostered illwill and antagonism between the communities, as well as between British India and the Native States. In his letter dated May, 28, 1906, Lord Minto wrote to Lord Morley : " I have been thinking a good deal lately of a possible counterpoise to Congress aims. I think one may find a solution in the Council of Princes, or in an elaboration of that idea.....Subjects for discussion and

procedure would have to be carefully thought out, but we should get different ideas from those of the Congress, emanating from men already possessing great interest in the good government of India.”¹ A Mohammadan

1. The Mahommadans of Eastern Bengal are almost all descended from low caste or aboriginal Hindus who long ago embraced Islam in hope of social improvement or from hard necessity. There was never any cause for quarrel between the Hindus and the Mahommadans as such. As simple cultivators they live side by side, and speak the same language. For the first time in history a religious feud was established between them by the partition of the province. For the first time the principle was enunciated in official circulars “divide and rule”. The hope was held out that the Partition would invest the Mahammadans with a “unity they had not enjoyed since the days of the old Mussulman Viceroys and kings”. The Mahammadans were officially favoured in every possible way. “My favourite wife” was the somewhat coarse phrase used by Sir Bampfild Fuller to express his feelings. The High Court in Calcutta was constrained to censure the racial bias judicially displayed by a District Judge. The opportunity was taken by evilly disposed persons with their headquarters at Dacca to scatter emissaries through the country preaching the revival of Islam, advocating the wildest extremes, and proclaiming to the villagers that the British Government was on their side and would exact no penalty for violence done to Hindus. No steps were taken by the authorities to check the dangerous propaganda. Riots followed, lives were lost, Hindu shops were looted, and many Hindu women were carried off. Some towns were deserted, women spent nights concealed in tanks and general terror prevailed throughout the country-side.

“An official excuse was at once put forward that the national boycott of foreign goods was the cause of the disturbances. But there was no vestige of foundation for such an explanation. The ill-feeling which had made itself manifest between the Hindus and the Mahammadans affected only the limited area in which the emissaries of

deputation was "engineered" to use Lady Minto's expression, to wait on the Viceroy at Simla on the 1st of October, 1906. The Viceroy was "entirely in accord" with its main demand to be represented on the electorate as a "community" "beyond its numerical strength" in recognition of "the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire." Thus was achieved "a work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of sixty two millions of people from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition."

The rivalries are unknown to the common people and the middle classes who compete for preferment and power and political ascendancy utilise the points of difference. In this overpopulated country, there is a continuous struggle to secure reservation of public

fanaticism had done their work. The judicial inquiries that were held conclusively proved that the object of the rioting was to molest the Hindus, and had nothing to do with any boycott. And yet Lord Morley was put up to reply in the House of Commons "The situation in Eastern Bengal was strained owing to the bitterness existing between Hindus and Mahammadans consequent on the attempts made to compel Mahammadanas by violence to abstain from purchasing foreign goods." There could be no more grotesque instance of the power officials have of misleading their chief." Sir Henry Cotton: *"Indian and Home Memories"*, P. 317. And again: Lord Olivier, a former Secretary of State of India observed: "No one with any close acquaintance with Indian affairs will be prepared to deny that, on the whole, there is a predominant bias in British officialdom in favour of the Muslim community, partly on the ground of closer sympathy but more largely as a makeweight against Hindu nationalism."

appointments by the different communities in proportion to their number. In this atmosphere of jealous competition, religion is used for securing jobs. The religious community acquires an economic value and a shrewd bureaucracy finds it convenient to carry on administration, and secure its strength by organising public life on the principle of a struggle for posts and patronage !

In the generous years of youth, the Hindu and the Moslem are often the best of friends. Outside India their patriotism is manifest. They get acquainted with the growing spirit of nationalism. The Moslem States outside India have not shown any special interest in their Indian co-religionists. Territorial nationalism has been the dominating force in their development. The Arab States revolted against the Ottoman Empire and secured their independence in 1918, and they are divided into four nationalities. Mustafa Kemal created a modern State out of the ruins of a mediaeval theocracy. He abolished the office of the Caliphate and established a Republic of secular character. Nationalism is the chief principle. Every citizen is a Turk so long as he lives within the national frontiers, speaks the Turkish language and makes the national ideal his own. The Egyptians are interested in the future fortunes of Egypt as an independent state. The Persians are a distinct nation and have forbidden the import of propagandist religious literature. The Afghans are building up a national state on the same lines. The Chinese Muslims fight against the Japanese Muslims. Sir Ronald Storrs, an intimate friend and associate of Lawrence during the Arab revolt and the first military Governor of Jerusalem writes ;

“As a factor in British policy, the doctrine of the Caliphate—of pan-Islam Theocracy—was mainly the creation of the India office. The supposed indignation of “His Majesty’s sixty million loyal Indian subjects” who appear alternatively under the journalese disguise of “Moslem susceptibilities”, delayed many reforms in the Near and Middle East.....” Those who are acquainted with the facts of human nature and the moving forces of the world are aware that a change of faith does not connote a change of nationality.

When the principle of separate electorates was embodied in the Reforms of 1909, the “dragon’s teeth” of hatred were sown, to use Lord Morley’s expression. Mr. Lionel Curtis wrote: “The concession of this principle when electoral institutions were inaugurated a few years ago, is the greatest blunder ever committed by the British Government of India. I believe, that, if this principle is perpetuated, we shall have saddled India with a new system of caste which will eat every year more deeply into her life. So long as it remains, India will never attain to the unity of nationhood. The longer it remains, the more difficult will it be to uproot it, till in the end, it will only be eradicated at the cost of civil war. To enable India to attain nationhood is the trust laid on us and in conceding to the establishment of communal representation we have, I hold, been false to that trust”. Instead of developing the civic consciousness of the people, we are trained to think in terms of communities and behave as partisans and not citizens. If the Government of India Act to build up a federal India failed, one of the chief reasons is the psychological

effect of the working of communal electorates these three decades. The great Muslim Divine Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who is also the President of the Congress says, "Those who make the proposal of alteration are flying in the face of history, ethnology and the tendency of modern times. When they say we are two nations, they beg the question. The ancestors of most of us were common and I for one do not accept the theory of a superior or inferior race or of different races. Mankind is one race and we have to live in harmony with one another. Providence brought us together over thousand years ago. We have fought, but so do blood brothers fight. So did Englishmen and Englishmen fight—as in the Wars of the Roses. But they did not insist on living as separate nations. During the thousand years we have reacted on one another to our mutual, spiritual, cultural, moral and material benefit. They want to put the hands of this clock back by centuries. No, it is no use trying to emphasize the differences. For that matter no two human beings are alike. Every lover of peace must emphasize similarities. Diversities but lend colour to essential similarities. What, therefore, I detest is the communal approach to the national problem. Nowhere in the world has a national problem been approached on communal lines. In a future constitution determined by Indian representatives, the Hindu or the Mussalman will have to think of his position and interests not as a Hindu or a Mussalman, but as a peasant or a Zamindar, as a labourer or a capitalist and so on. Religious freedom will be one of the fundamental rights under any free constitution, but whatever that constitution, it will

be nothing worth unless it reflects equality of opportunity or economic freedom for all. But why must I argue this? Let Mr. Jinnah get himself elected by the Muslims and come to the Constituent Assembly and press his demands on behalf of the Indian Muslim world.”¹

It is tempting for all of us to sacrifice the permanent interests of the country for immediate benefit. But those who patiently pursue the good of the country, setting aside immediate success and profit may seem to fail. But even through failure they will serve the cause of truth.

We are today in the midst of a world war and we ardently admire those who are fighting the menace which threatens to engulf the whole world and throw it back. The workers who go on with their jobs night and day in the midst of death and destruction building aeroplanes while bombs crash around them, forging guns and fitting shells in the factories which are half burnt, the sailors who go out in ships to find the deadly submarines, the gallant airmen who are so bravely risking their lives and saving their country, reveal of what precious metal the centuries have made the British people. Their valour and serenity under fire move the imagination of the Indian youth, who are anxious to throw themselves into the struggle and do their very best to defend their own country. Even now with the Nazi hordes thrusting at the gates of Moscow, and maturing their plans of attack of this country through Iraq, and Iran and with the Japanese preparing to strike through Indo-China at Burma and Dutch

1. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, by Mahadev Desai (1941), Pages 170-171.

East Indies, India with nearly four hundred millions of people is menaced but is unarmed and unready to meet the attack. The Government of the country instead of calling upon the youth to fight for a free India, are arguing that nothing can be done until the irreconcilables are reconciled. His Excellency the Viceroy in a recent broadcast alluded in generous terms to India's war effort: "Her young men have come forward to answer the call for service on the sea, on the land and in the air; her factories, her mills, her dockyards are working night and day to produce the munitions and equipment, the ships and vehicles of war; her Princes and people have poured out their wealth in free will offerings to meet the cost of war." Yet, Mr. Chancellor, the response is not nationwide. Magnificent as the achievements of Indian troops and men are, what are they in comparison to what India might have done with her millions of brave men, with her rich resources for great industries to equip modern armies and airforces? We are up to our necks in this war but many of us do not feel that it is our war though we wish to do so. India is anxious to co-operate in the great struggle to enlarge the bounds of human freedom. Indian unity today is essentially a British interest. Mr. Amery said in his recent speech at Manchester: "If India were broken up and reverted to chaos tomorrow, Indians have to set about trying to invent for her at any rate some minimum of unity against dangers from outside." And if that is impaired, the world will hold the British responsible for they ruled the country all these decades, with an absoluteness for which there is no parallel. They initiated policies and executed them. We are told that this

war is a clash of ideals. If it is so, if we are standing up for the ideals of unselfish service, against the material one of desire for gain, let us not lose this moral ideal by protecting what we have gained by means which we today condemn. In this critical hour of human history, it is Britain's duty to throw aside her hesitation and summon India to her side.

The problems facing us are neither Hindu nor Muslim, but Indian. They cannot be resolved into religious, communal or sectarian components. India is an indivisible unit and will have to act as such in peace and war. We are united both in safety and in peril. We all face a common peril, and must participate in the common task of winning and preserving our liberties. We are all faced by the same need, a sufficiency of food, a decent human status. Our social disabilities and our political and economic interests are common. We must strive to remove them. If we succeed, the bogeys that haunt us in the present gloom will disappear. If we fail, nothing else matters.

The purpose of an Indian university should be to work for an India in which the Hindu and the Muslim, the Buddhist and the Christian, the Jew and the Parsi can take pride. Communal prejudice is not instinctive but it is a cultivated attitude. The cheap press and the popular demagogue utter loudly the slogans and appeal to our immediate self-interest. In the confusion of inharmonious voices we fail to understand one another's speech. We make loud protests if the reservoirs which supply us with water get poisoned and until the poison is removed,

we are not content. But when the wells of thought are being continuously poisoned by our own leaders for their private profit and ambition, we look on powerless and silent at the corruptors of public opinion. If we are to recover a proper view of life we must elevate the ideal of citizenship above the conflict of sectional interests and remove through educational institutions the obstacles to mutual understanding. In a residential university where we work together in the class room, in the Library, the Debating Society and the play ground, misunderstanding and suspicion melt away and a spirit of goodwill and co-operation grow up. If the thoughts we have cultivated, if the habits we have developed, during our years in the university are to be used for sowing seeds of destruction then our universities may well be scrapped. We may not give up hope simply because the powers of mischief are more active. We must bear as little malice as we can towards those whose weakness has caused the present trouble. And whatever you do as university men you must keep alive the recognition of the sacredness of truth and sensitivity to human need. FAREWELL.

GANDHIJI AND MALAVIYAJI

In concluding the proceedings of the Special Silver Jubilee Convocation of the Benares Hindu University held on Vasant Panchami, the 21st January 1942, Professor Radhakrishnan said :—

Mr. Pro-Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi, Ladies and Gentlemen :

It is now my great pleasure to propose a cordial vote of thanks to all those who have helped to make this function such a conspicuous success. We are proud that we have for our Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor true friends of the Benares Hindu University and great believers in its ideals. His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner is unable to be present on account of a domestic bereavement, but he has sent us a heartening speech which will be printed and circulated. As another token of his goodwill he has sent us a cheque for Rs. 25000/- on the occasion of this Silver Jubilee. Our Pro-Chancellor, Maharajadhiraj Sir Kameshwar Singh Bahadur is an ardent friend of the University, one on whom we could rely in our difficulties and he has increased the great debt which this University is under to him by giving us to-day a magnificent sum of three lakhs of rupees of which one lakh is to be utilised for the construction of the Ayurvedic College extension. The income from the other two lakhs of rupees is to be utilised for the development of a diploma course in Ayurveda. The extension is to be called after his late beloved wife Mahārānyādhirāni Shri

Kameshwari Priya Devi. I have already said that His Highness the Maharaja of Morvi has given us a donation of a lakh of rupees for the construction of a hostel. We have received several donations from merchant benefactors, but that Prince among merchants, Raja Dr. Baldev Das Birla, has to-day granted us a sum of a lakh of rupees for the construction of a building to house the colleges of Oriental Learning and Theology. Besides this he has given us a sum of Rs. 10,000/- from the revenue of which we are to establish a lectureship in Pali attached to the College of Oriental Learning. With such friends among Princes and merchant princes the future of the University is assured.

We are living to-day in a dark and uncertain world. The spread of war from one end of the world to the other, the increase of the weapons of destruction of an unprecedented scale and the rise of bitterness and hatred beyond measure are things which make us sometimes despair of the future of humanity. Like the machines with which we deal, we seem to have become cold and callous, insensitive to human feelings, to the sorrow of human hearts, and to the tension of human minds. Often a spirit of defeatism creeps over us making us feel that we are powerless to overcome the forces that are surrounding us, that we are caught helpless in the wheels of the machine which is over-powering us. The world is too much engrossed in its selfish designs to realise its own shame, and too weak to aspire to those eternal verities of love and truth which have helped to sustain civilisation since time began. Men and women in different parts of the world are meditating in their minds

on a means of escape from this chaos and darkness and asking themselves whether it is impossible to rear an earth in the image of the spirit, a world based on sanity, mutual understanding, love, where women would be able to bear children without the dread that their young bones would be strewn across the battlefields of the world. In this mood of questioning, of diminished self-confidence, they look to India whether they might not rekindle the expiring candle of their own civilisation at the living flame of India, and when they turn to India, it is not to the politicians, not to the merchants, not to the industrialists that they look, for there are plenty of such people in their own countries, but to the prophet of this great land, Mahatma Gandhi. He has warned us about the tragedy which has afflicted us. He has pointed out to us that the fatality we are faced with is not external to us but is within ourselves and that we are not unequipped for the battle of overcoming it. At a time when the world is groping in the dark, he gives us faith; when we are surrounded by disillusionment, he imparts hope; when we are lost in resentment and misunderstanding, he calls us back to the path of love and truth. A living symbol of non-violence, incapable of the least ungenerous thought, with a heart so large as to encompass the whole of humanity, he is truly a man of peace, and therefore the most powerful adversary to the present passion-torn, war-shattered world. He is here with us to bless our enterprise. It is a proud day which we will remember to the end of our lives that we are able to listen to the voice of the ancient spirit of India from the lips of one who has made it a part of his very being.

Somewhere Thomas Hardy says that a Dorset workman was presented with a bit of stone from Areopagus. He looked at it with awe and amazement and said "To think that this bit of stone listened to the voice of St. Paul." Here we have not a bit of stone, but a whole landscape. If only nature could have life and memory, the stones of Benares would be able to repeat the words of Veda Vyasa, of the Rishis of the Upanishads, the sermons of Buddha, the message of the Gita, and the sayings of hundreds of saints and teachers who have lived in this neighbourhood. Is it possible for us to think of a more suitable site for the development of the Hindu University? And is it possible for us to think of a guide, protector and director of all our activities, nobler than our venerable Rector, selfless, loyal, gentle but not weak, determined but not aggressive, a spirit as clean as the mountain air? He has lighted a lamp here, whose light will penetrate far into space and time and will not be put out, by God's grace, as long as civilisation lasts. In a world where men strive and gods decide, no better combination of place and personality could have been thought of. It is a matter of great rejoicing that in his 81st year, he is with us to witness the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of his pet child. May I on behalf of the Indian nation, its princes and people, offer our prayerful gratitude for his life-work and wish him in the words of the Vedas 'JĪVEMA ŚARADAS-ŚATAM'. May he live for a hundred years.

With these two men, Malaviyaji and Gandhiji on our dais, men touched by grace, sanctified by spirit, this city of Benares already holy becomes holier.

bhavadvidhāh bhāgavatāh tīrthabhūtāh...
tīrthīkurvanti tīrthāni.

It is true that we have a debt of nearly 20 lakhs of rupees and our finances are not satisfactory. But the real wealth of a university is not to be measured by the amount of debt it has. You measure it by the extent of the sacrificial service that has endowed it and in that wealth this University is very rich. I have no doubt that with friends among all classes of the Indian Community who realise that it is a people's institution, this University which is our pride will not be allowed to languish. It is an honour for any of us to assist the University, materially and morally and help us to fulfil the mission of India in the world at large, the mission of leading the halting steps of humanity nearer its goal of a kingdom of heaven on earth. May this University live long and realise its ideals for human progress.

RELIGION: A PLEA FOR SANITY*

We live in an age of movement, of rapid movement, not only in physical but in intellectual and spiritual affairs also. Everywhere the old barriers are breaking down, the old ideas are disappearing. Religion, which was hitherto regarded as the strongest of all conservative forces, has not escaped this law of drastic change. Some are attempting to clarify religious ideas and reform religious practices ; others, of a revolutionary cast of mind, are attempting to dethrone religion from its place in human life. If the revolutionaries succeed, India will lose her distinctive individuality ; for religion has been the master passion of the Indian mind, the pre-supposition and basis of its culture and civilisation. The history of India has for its landmarks not wars and emperors, but saints and scriptures.

This historic life of the country is being threatened today by two forces, dogmatic denial and dogmatic affirmation, blank negation and blind faith. These two which agree in their spirit and method, though they differ in their content and conviction, have a common origin, and are the outcome of a singular narrowness of mind or obscurantism.

The denying spirits complain that religion has been a force of dangerous reaction. By withdrawing itself from the scene of mankind's social agony, it lends support to

* A broadcast talk from Calcutta Station of the All India Radio.

the existent order. Those, who burn with a passion for social justice, find religion to be worthless at its best, and vicious at less than best. They ask : Is there a God ? Does it pay to be upright ? What is the meaning of life after all ? Is the present distribution of power and opportunity, where a few have a chance to live without working, while the many have their backs broken by the burdens they bear, is this order justified ? When the evils of the world cry out for redress, is it the time to discuss the state of our souls or the pictures of the unseen ? Religion seems to be utterly irrelevant to the problems of the world in which we live.

There is a good deal to be said in favour of this criticism of religion, but it is a criticism, not of religion as such, but of its otherworldly and abstract character. The mark of spirituality is not exile from the natural world. The truly religious are opposed to the injustice and iniquity of the world. They befriend not the strong but the weak and the suffering, those who cannot help themselves. '*Yasmin sarvāṇi bhūtāni atmaivābhut vijānatah.*' Thou shalt love thy neighbour as *thyself*. The condition is absolute : *ātmaiva*, *thyself*. There must be freedom and equality of status. Such a demand would make for the establishment of a universal community of free persons, and require those who accept it to overcome the artificial barriers of race and creed, nationality and wealth. Unless a man is economically secure, he cannot develop his individuality. If he is starving, his personality will wither and die. All attempts at establishing a social democracy, a more equal

distribution of wealth and opportunity, may be regarded as a genuine manifestation of the religious spirit.

I should like however to utter a warning. Man cannot find his happiness, simply because we secure for him a sufficiency of material goods. We all know that there are many in this world who have all the comforts and conveniences which wealth can bring, who are yet suffering from emptiness of soul, from nudity of spirit. They have done with the radiance and gladness of life. They have no hopes to inspire, no ambitions to realise, no faith to live by, no happiness to which they can look forward. Their minds are distracted, their action is fragmentary and futile. Suppose we succeed in our attempt to build an earthly paradise, where we will have good roads and water-supply, excellent sanitation, free education for all, unlimited picturehouses and soft drinks, golf links for adults, lights, lifts and wireless installations for everyone, do you think we will be contented and happy? Our activities are moved, not merely by the economic motive but also by vanity and ambition, jealousy and ill-temper, or by a noble unselfish idealism or by a disinterested hatred of injustice and cruelty. Our selfishness and stupidity, our false pride and dignity will continue to corrode and spoil the purity of our personal relationships. We will not cease to ask, "Why do we stiffen, grow old and die?" Man has far horizons, invincible hopes, thoughts that wander through eternity, projects that cannot be accomplished in time. To find the way to truth, to create a work of beauty, to understand another human soul, he is willing to scourge himself, to

endure hunger and thirst, to give up his all. This preference for the values of spirit is not an eccentricity.

The recognition of this vital fact, that man lives for a purpose larger than he sees, and is most himself when he realises it, has been the deepest phase of India's life. Occasionally, perhaps, each of us has had a few moments of impersonal joy, when we seem to tread not on solid earth but on uplifting air, when our being is transfused with a presence that is unutterable, yet apprehensible, when we have a sense of spirit, timeless and eternal, when we touch the very limits of beatitude, where seeking interest and yearning unfulfilled yield to attainment and serenity, when time stops short and life is as still as death, when we contact the universal reality whose shadow is immortality and death. *Yasya chāyā amṛtam, yasya mṛtyuh.* Death and immortality, life has in it the seeds of both, and it depends on us, on our choice, on our effort what we make of it. Life is an opportunity and we can use it for life eternal or dust and ashes. Man's peculiar position in the world is that he stands between the two poles of Nature and the Absolute, the finite and the infinite. He arises out of the natural conditions of existence, is bound up with these and is subject to them in every fibre of his being. In so far as he is a pure product of nature, he cannot realise the true meaning and purpose of his existence. But he has from the beginning an urge towards a higher perfection, beyond his merely natural status. This urge produces a disturbance of his natural harmony which is the product of animal instinct, a convulsion of his life. A verse in the *Mahābhārata* reads

*amṛtam chaiva mṛtyuscha dvayam dehe pratiṣṭhitam ।
mṛtyur āpadyate mohāt, satyenāpadyate amṛtam ॥*

By *moha*, by passion, by blindness, by folly, by infatuation, we fall into death ; by *satya*, by truth, by loyalty, by devotion, we gain *amṛta*. To be born, to grow up, to mate, to found a family and support it, would be a human edition of animal existence. To live in the world of sense with the ideals of spirit is the privilege and destiny of man. To make out of common clay true immortals who occupy themselves with human affairs, even though they possess divine souls, is the religious tradition of India.

The life of the tradition, the duration of the memory, depends on the continuous appearance of creative spirits. They keep the memory green ; they maintain the tradition alive. At the moment, however, there is such a spate of spirituality in our country, that it has become somewhat difficult for us to discriminate between the genuine saint and the spurious one. There are many in India, perhaps more than in other countries, who are willing to impoverish themselves in every way to attain the spiritual goal, and their credulity and hunger for spirit are being exploited by clever adventurers who beat the drum and bang the cymbals, indulge in publicity stunts, to draw recruits. It is therefore essential to exercise the greatest care and discrimination. I can only set forth here a few considerations.

Firstly, a true teacher has to be sought out. He is not readily accessible to the public. He has no airs of superiority and is not anxious for public recognition.

Those who aim at these rewards are not free from the weaknesses to which you and I are subject. Saintliness, when genuine, is marked by true humility and love. It is difficult to find it in organizations which believe in signboards and advertisements for their spiritual wares.

Secondly, the true teacher not only imparts instruction but transmits vitality. He helps to raise our being to a higher level. He demands from us, not blind faith and implicit obedience, but alertness of mind and moral restraint. If we are deliberately harnessed in blinkers, or forced into a groove, our minds become muzzled, and we cannot think freely. Spiritual insight is not anti-rational. It may go beyond reason, but it is not against reason. It is the deepest rationality of which we are capable. In it we think more profoundly, feel more deeply and see more truly. The teacher who tells us, "Blessed are those who do not think but believe," is leading us astray. The *Upanisad* says, "tad vijñānena paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ, tad Brahma, vijñānena, viśiṣṭena jñānena, paripaśyanti sarvataḥ pūrnam paśyanti, dhīrāḥ vivekinah." The bold thinkers see Him by means of knowledge. The *Gita* asks us to cross-examine even the teacher (*paripraśnena*). Reason is the voice of God. It achieves its end by persuasion. Krishna, after stating his views to Arjuna, tells him "do as you please, *yathēcchasi tathā kuru.*" Any teacher who fetters the freedom of the pupil, who has no respect for his personality, is not a true guide. Intellectual death is not the condition of spiritual life.

Thirdly, we progress in perfection only to the extent we progress in purity of heart. We must purify our-

selves without ceasing. We are so full of wrong notions, erroneous judgments, passion and malice. We would be ashamed if we only saw ourselves as we really are. Vanity, sensuality, attachment to our petty whims and small comforts, extinguish the lights which make us see the dark side of ourselves. In our blindness, we flatter ourselves and invent a thousand excuses for our weaknesses. If any one says a word about our faults, we cannot bear him. He will rouse in us impatience, grief, bitterness, fury. The glorification of self, I and mine, in all the fields of life, individual and collective, leads man into darkness and misery. To be truly free, one must be vigilant in casting aside vanity and presumption. Discipline is essential for human life. Whatever we may call ourselves, Hindu or Muslim, Sikh or Christian, whatever doctrines we may profess, their essential character as religious consists in the effort to get rid of prejudices so as to see the truth, to get rid of selfish passions so as to do the right.

But, unfortunately, many of those who have for their profession the cure of souls, especially those of weak and unstable nerves, practise a kind of sorcery and bewitch the emotional, the immature, the nervy, into a kind of magic sleep. They confuse spirit and sense, religion and the powerful seductions of life. The teacher is unconditionally obeyed and believed, and often worshipped as a God. His moral or religious integrity or depravity is not examined, but he is trusted for his saving power. This unthinking hero-worship has become a pernicious influence on the religion of our country to-day. No human being has the right to call upon us to

believe in him blindly or surrender our moral scruple in obedience to his mandate. Only God can say “*sarva dharmān parityajya māmekam śaraṇam vraja.*” “Call none your father on earth ; for one is your father who is in heaven.” “There is no God but Allah.” There are no middlemen in religion.

The great religious tradition of India can be preserved only if we avoid these two extremes of atheism and blind faith, and strive for right thinking and right living. Tradition is memory ; it is humanity's memory of its own past. This memory dies an artificial or accidental death when it is forcibly interrupted. It dies a natural death when it becomes crystallised and congealed. If atheism succeeds, the tradition of India will suffer death by accident ; if blind faith and superstition overtake us it will die a natural death, of old age, of hardening of arteries. Let us, therefore, avoid these two extremes.

FREEDOM IS SOMETHING DEEP AND ELEMENTAL*

It is the usual practice in our Convocation to get a distinguished visitor to speak to the new graduates a few words of advice and exhortation. On account of troubled conditions, we have not been able to secure any eminent person to address this Convocation. So I have taken upon myself the duty of saying a few words on this occasion.

We must wake up from the sleep of centuries and hold our heads high. India has a message for the whole world. Her treasures of spiritual wisdom are for the healing of nations. A nation that has produced such culture and such men for centuries has a right to independence, to shape her own future in keeping with her past. If India wants freedom, it is for enabling her to teach the world lessons of moral perfection and love. It is impossible for those who have not experienced foreign rule to realize how deadening it is to the soul of the country. Freedom is something deep and elemental. Speeches, like those of the Prime Minister about there being in this country a white army, larger than at any time in the British connection, and he is, therefore, entitled to report to the House that the situation in India at this moment gives no occasion for undue despondence or alarm, are

* Address to the Convocation of the Benares Hindu University, 29th Nov. 1942.

highly provocative. They burn into the Indian soul deep resentment and bitterness.

A Programme more Positive than Repression

To preserve order is the primary duty of every government but it does not stop there. There is another obligation on a government to base its rule on the consent and goodwill of the governed. It is the duty of a government not only to maintain law and order but to create conditions which make for law and order. We need a programme, more positive than repression which is not an aid to civil peace or war effort. The Secretary of State for India said : "Indian nationalism, the desire to see India's destiny directed by Indian hands free from external control, is not confined to any one party in India. It is shared by all and to that aim we in this country have solemnly pledged ourselves, before India and before the world. In the name of His Majesty's Government, I repeat that pledge today." But when the fulfilment of this pledge is put aside to some future date in the name of the war, doubts arise. We are glad that the course of the war has changed for the better and we hope very much that it will end soon with the victory of the Allies. But if we have to win it on the moral plane also where we have the power, equality and freedom must be established. In fighting for our rightful place in the Commonwealth Of Nations, we should not sacrifice our inner wealth of spirit, the inexhaustible richness of human sensibility. If we give up the traditional courtesy of this ancient race, if we fail in love and forgiveness, the soul of India will have departed from this land. Nothing is lost if

the spirit lives. This world plunged into darkness will wake up to the truth and come to its senses. Daylight shall yet return, for time is boundless and the world is wide'...

You will be the torch-bearers of the ancient spirit of India for which this University stands. Remember that the things we prize are not of ourselves, but exist by the grace of the work, thought and sufferings of generations of men. It is your task to conserve, to transmit, to correct and enrich the ancient heritage of values you have received so that those who come after you may receive it more solid, more secure, more widely accessible, more generously shared than you have received.

Education, a Training for Human Environment

Education is not a mere intellectual enterprise ; it is a training for human environment, by civilizing our attitude and refining our emotions. It is dedicated to social, moral and intellectual ends. It initiates the pupil into the traditional pattern of living in the race. India is not to be the passive instrument of outsiders' wills and forces. We could borrow from others experiences but we cannot build on them. We must, therefore, preserve our individuality. To lose touch with tradition, is to doom ourselves to mental ruin. If we are to play a worthy part in the world we must know our spirit and preserve it. India had passed through many valleys of humiliation, but she has not entered the valley of death. Her territory has been invaded, but her soul is unaffected. India has been tested by many trials, strengthened by

many struggles, and made enduring by manly suffering and long patience. A spiritual inspiration has been the secret of her long life, of her immortality....

Let me now make a few comments on the Upaniṣad text I read to you. The art of living is insisted on. The pupil must not do anything which is questionable, though it is done by many good people. Whatever duties are blameless, he must be devoted to them. It is not given to us to be perfect. In spite of our care and vigilance, we may be guilty of lapses, we may be erring so the teacher says : do not imitate our failings. For leadership and guidance, we must look to the conduct of the wise, the finest and the most disinterested consciences of which the nation is capable. When we are in doubt about what is right, we must take for our guidance, what is done in similar circumstances by Brahmins competent to judge, apt and devoted, but not harsh lovers of virtue.

Listen to Voices of the Wise

We must abstain from personal quarrels, and petty bickerings. We must not play the partisan. Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Christian Bible. The guilt is due to the force of circumstances or impulsiveness. There is nothing in the world which is completely divine, or hopelessly diabolic. Chance plays a large part. Lastly, there is insistence on discipline, on respect for superiors, on obedience to authority. It is the duty of pupils to listen to the voices of the wise, to respect the wishes of elders and to carry out the prescribed duties.

India never stood for national and cultural isolation. Her spiritual heights rest on a basis that embraces all humanity. Whatever men love reason, shun darkness, turn towards light, praise virtue, despise meanness, hate vulgarity, kindle sheer beauty, wherever minds are sensitive, hearts generous, spirits free, there is your country. Let us adopt that loyalty to humanity instead of a sectional devotion to one part of the human race.

UNIVERSITIES *

Your Highnesses, Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen :

May I, on behalf of the Universities of India, Burma and Ceylon, request you Mr. Chancellor to convey our grateful thanks to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, for his gracious message of welcome and good wishes. To you Mr. Chancellor and the other authorities of the Osmania University we are thankful for the excellent arrangements they have made for our comfort and convenience, and the long excursions they have organised for our education and entertainment. In the few days we have been here we have acquired some idea of the past achievements and the future aspirations of this great University. We have heard from you an outline of the plans for the educational development of this State. I may assure you that we will watch with the utmost sympathy and interest the future progress of this University.

The last quinquennial conference was held at Bombay in March, 1939 and the intervening period has seen momentous events in human history. All those who are sensitive to the horrors of modern wars, its unspeakable sorrow and suffering and sacrifice, are asking whether we cannot save ourselves from these periodic sanguinary

* Presidential Address at the Quinquennial Conference of Universities, December 1943.

upheavals, whether we cannot re-organise the foundations of civilised life so as to make the world safe for humanity.

We rejoice in the Allied victories and fervently hope that the new year may herald the approach of peace. Speaking at Cairo last Wednesday, the 8th of December, Field Marshal Smuts said that this would be the last Christmas of the war. He added : "There must not ever be a recurrence of these disasters which have devastated human civilisation from age to age. I hope that all the sacrifices made by the human race, colossal suffering, will not have been in vain." The most decisive years of human history will not be so much the years of war culminating in final victory as the period immediately following it. In the last war many people accepted willingly suffering and anguish and millions gave up their lives in the hope of making the world safe for democracy and the spirit of man. And in the years following the victory their hopes were betrayed and the peace was lost. We passed through the fire but perished in the smoke. The period between the two wars was one of incessant strain and antagonism among nations manifesting itself in diplomatic pressure, economic threats and open warfare. Two world wars in one generation demonstrates clearly that man as a social animal has failed. There is a feeling of frustration which is more encouraging than that of complacency.

A great hope is sweeping across the earth to-day. Millions are facing suffering and sacrifice sustained by the conviction that the world will be made anew, that

enslaved humanity will be freed, that there will be a great revolution in human history, and that common man will have freedom from fear and want. Men and women everywhere are in the mood for sacrifice and are prepared for essential changes. If the sequel to victory is not to be frustration, the urge to return to the pre-war habits and procedures in the relations among nations requires to be checked. We need a re-education of human nature and a reorganisation of our political and economic institutions. If victory is not to prove a mockery, if the crisis, before which civilisation stands, is to be tided over, if the forces of evil and retrogression which have caused wars, are not to appear in other forms in other lands, fundamental changes are required in the structure and spirit of society. If this great purpose beyond the winning of the war does not animate the hearts and minds of men and women, there is grave danger that our plans to make the world safe may come to naught and the world once more drift into war. Addressing the Harvard University on 6th September of this year, on the occasion of receiving the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, Mr. Churchill said, "We must go on. It must be world anarchy or world order." "Tyranny is our foe, whatever trappings or disguise it wears. Whatever language it speaks, be it external or internal, we must for ever be on our guard, ever mobilised and vigilant, always ready to spring at its throat." If we fight for empires and race domination, we fight on the wrong side, we fight for tyranny and we belong with Hitler. In one of his recent speeches, Mr. Churchill said: "What we have, we hold." The Minister for Information,

Mr. Brendan Bracken, affirms that " people, who maintain that pre-war England is dead forever, are making a very great mistake." These are the worst portents for the future. If, after victory, we revert to our past, if we think of the future in terms of holding on to what we have, preserving our privileges, maintaining our class position at home and possessions abroad, this war is a criminal waste and the world will be in flames again if perchance we might see better. Let us not take short views of our self interest and glory and defeat the great hope and vision of an ordered human society.

If our hopes are not to be betrayed once again, we have to defeat tyranny in the realms of thought and create the will for world peace. The instruments for training the mind and educating human nature should be used to develop the proper social outlook without which institutional machinery is of little use. The Brains Trust of Great Britain was asked the question, " Why is the effort of propaganda for evil always great and insignificant for good ? " Many irrelevant answers were given except the one that the propaganda for good has never been seriously tried. Educational institutions were used to corrupt and not elevate the people. In former ages, despots carried out their designs by disfranchising the masses and making them slaves. To-day dictators exploit the fear, the ignorance and stupidity of the masses, twist and cripple their minds, and make mental slaves of them. No greater servitude can be imagined than the way in which common people are compelled to work and give their lives for causes which they do not understand, much less agree with, by leaders who drive them

like cattle and let them be slaughtered like game. Children are born sincere and sympathetic. They possess the native raw loyalty of man to man but instead of strengthening these generous impulses our educational systems warp their minds by offering them rallying symbols of race, class or nation. They are made victims of the religion of force, of the cult of blood, of the contempt for the abstract, of the superstition of the country, of the defeat of gentleness, of the betrayal of faith. We are asked to live and die for anti-social and fictional abstractions by false propaganda which masquerades as education. The human longing to love, to create, to take risks does not get a chance. Spontaneity dies, thought petrifies and the human in us withers away. To conquer war, to make the world free and safe, we need a sincere and inspired voice like Jonah's which would cry: "Be ye converted and repent or Ninevah shall be destroyed." Humility becomes us all. A new technique, a revolutionary one has to be adopted. Talking about the feud between the houses of Capulet and Montague, Mercutio slain in the duel, in the insight of the dying moment, cried: "A plague o' both your houses." That bitter feud of one house against the other was cut across by a love that broke the vicious circle of its hate. In that final moment of the play Capulet says: "O Brother Montague, give me thy hand."

The Chinese have a saying: "If you are planning for one year, sow grain; if for ten years, plant trees; but if you are planning for a hundred years, grow men". We must grow a new type of men and women for the new

society. This can be done in schools and colleges. The newness does not depend on the cultural content we acquire, but the spirit we absorb in educational institutions. Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia can make whole nations accept and live for their ideas of race and class. It does not seem impossible that we could create a force of opinion which would stand for justice, liberty and human brotherhood. Any direction given to the content of education must start from the universities. They are to make the soul of a people. Their task is not to supply us with a detailed creed but give an outlook on life, an attitude of mind, that is reverent to the eternal values and responsive to the temporal events. They should strengthen the force of moral principles common to all religions and ethical systems. Indian educationists believe that the aim of education is to increase our awareness of the reality of spiritual values, unseen by the mortal eye, of the beauty and wisdom that the senses do not perceive, which we can reach only by the mind or the soul which we only apprehend inwardly. Scientific discovery and invention have broken down the barriers of time and space which all these centuries kept the peoples of the world apart but the university spirit must break down the forces of suspicion and self interest which are as strong today as they ever were. Physical proximity has not meant spiritual approximation. We are not yet mentally and spiritually prepared for the close intimacy into which we are brought by the forces of science and technology. This can be done only if we give to education a humane and an international purpose. The University men form a brotherhood of learning with-

out a doctrinal creed. This is the meaning of that ancient phrase, the republic of letters. Recent exchanges of students between China and India illustrate it. No magic formula, no password, no political device can lead us to peace. We must be educated into the realisation of the truth that we are members one of another. We must reach a unity of spirit before we can get together for political unity.

It is university men with the universal spirit who are necessary to build up the progressive life and thought of our country. It is in the universities that we have to develop the attitudes and dispositions, the ways of thinking and doing which will make democratic institutions work. We are criticised as being unfit for democracy, that we are victims of communal passions, that we do not pull together even when external danger threatens us. The extent to which these changes are valid is due to the defective system of education which has grown up haphazardly without any reference to the temperament of the people or the conditions of the country. Education is neither free nor compulsory at the lowest stages. Children grow up incapable of an intelligent outlook or independent thought. In the material and intellectual realms we have made less progress in a century and a half than other Eastern nations like Japan or even subject nationalities in Soviet Union in much less time.

We are grateful to Mr. Sargent for his scheme of National Education. It is exceedingly modest, when compared with educational achievements abroad. It endeavours to provide a national system of education in

which, while every boy and girl will get a basic education, children of special aptitudes and talents will have opportunities of higher education in schools and colleges, general and technical, by means of a system of scholarships and special places. His programme aims at no more than has been achieved in Britain and other countries of the West, and is the minimum for which India ought to plan in the post-war period of reconstruction.

The Inter-University Board had the opportunity of considering his Memorandum so far as it relates to university education. For the teaching profession, for the development of the medical service, for the education of scientists and engineers, for helping forward industrial research and development, for providing leadership in public life, university education will have to be strengthened in quality and quantity. The applications of science affect us all and if our national standards of living are to be raised, graduate and post-graduate education will have to be developed. In 1937-38, the United States of America had in her universities a million students and a 100,000 whole time staff members, while in Britain there were only 50,000 students. With a population three times as large as Britain's, America had twice as many university teachers as Britain had students. In India, we require larger numbers of students at the university stage than the Report suggests. Though the sergent scheme is mainly intended for British India, it is hoped that Indian States will implement the scheme much earlier and help British India.

The architecture of the palatial Osmania University buildings where we find a happy blend of the Ajanta and

the Moghul styles is, I take it, a symbol of the mutual love and good will of the two great communities, Muslim and Hindu. It indicates that in the universities at least feelings of love and brotherhood among all communities are fostered and a broad and liberal tolerance is developed. The future of India is bound up with the development of this attitude.

Hyderabad is the largest and the most important Indian State, where the peoples of different creeds could be brought together in a spontaneous unity, sustained by the tradition of the Unity of India. India is not a geographical expression, not a mere administrative area in which there is no force of tradition or adequate cultural cohesion. India from the beginning of her history has tried to respect all the great human values and sought to unite them. It must be the special obligation of the Indian universities to promote cultural unity and communal harmony.

Once again, Mr. Chancellor, I should like to thank you and your University for all your kindness and consideration for us.

INDIA'S HERITAGE*

May I, on behalf of the Reception Committee of the Twelfth Oriental Conference and the Benares Hindu University, extend to you all a most cordial welcome. When, last June, Professor Altekar sounded me about inviting the Conference to Benares, I did not encourage the idea as we were not then quite certain about our own affairs. When, in the Puja vacation, Professors Rangaswami Iyengar and Nilakantha Sastri explained to me the position, I felt inclined to invite the Conference though I was not unaware of the difficulties ahead of us, mainly due to short notice. I was able to invite the Conference to Benares as I could count on the goodwill and co-operation not only of the members of the University but also of such tried friends as His Highness the Chancellor and the Pro-Chancellor, Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga who is here with us today to open the Conference, the Maharajakumar of Vizianagaram, whose palace is converted, on such occasions as this, into the unofficial guest-house of the University, and whose skill, influence and possessions are at our service, Raja Baldeo Das Birla and his sons, who know not only how to earn but what is more important, how to spend.

These are war times and we are not wealthy and so the Conference will be what it should be, it will take its business more seriously and its luxuries less expensively. At any rate, a Conference meeting in this sacred city

* Welcome speech at the Oriental Conference, December 1943.

will, I hope, feel inclined to be a little austere in its outlook and behaviour.

While I extend a cordial welcome to every one of the delegates for the Conference, I should like to make special mention of the representative of the Chinese Government. We send, through him, our fraternal greetings to the Chinese Government. We have watched with affectionate interest and admiration the courageous efforts made by the Chinese Government to maintain education and culture in the midst of a long and calamitous war in which many universities and centres of learning have been destroyed or damaged. If the world is to be established once more in the ways of peace, it can only be by the maintenance of high spiritual standards. In this task, China and India have been close and friendly partners for centuries. China received the religion of the Buddha from India. Even in other disciplines like science and philosophy, music and literature, art and architecture, the influence of Indian culture is manifest. Indian scholars went to China, spread the Arya Dharma and translated Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit into Chinese. Many classical works of India are to be found in Chinese translations. Chinese monks and scholars came to India in successive waves in different periods for learning the Dharma. Recently, the Chinese, who have never been too proud to learn from any country, have been going to Europe and America and contacts between China and India have been somewhat dimmed. But the exchanges of students and scholars, inaugurated this year may prepare for a closer understanding between these two great countries and bring about a spiritual awakening

in the whole East. In the post-war years, India will again attract pilgrims and scholars from the whole East and what place is there in India more sacred than Kāśī?

To a Conference which includes so many historians, I need not talk at length on the antiquity and glory of Benares. Kāśī is among the well-known cities which help us to attain spiritual freedom.¹ It is said that when Brahmā weighed the sky with its gods and Kāśī with its saints, Kāśī, being the heavier, sank down to earth by the force of gravity while the sky being the lighter soared upward.² Benares has been the focus of an unbroken and impressive spiritual tradition which is universal and individual, embracing in thought the whole universe but worshipping the eternal whose throne is the inmost shrine of the human soul. In these days of darkness and travail of spirit, I need not say how very vital it is for us to remember the values for which this city has stood. If we turn to the Indus valley civilisation which the archaeologists have unfolded for us in recent times, we find there something like the figure of Siva, in a typical attitude of Yoga, calling upon all those who have ears to hear, the inhabitants of the native land as well as invaders from outside, who frequently pass and repass, to be kings not over others but over themselves. Perfection is the goal and the way to it is through self-conquest, through courage and austerity, through unity and brotherhood in life.

1. ayodhyā mathurā māyā kāśī kāñcī avantikā
purī dvāravatī caiva saptaitā mokṣadāyikāḥ.

2. svarlokaś tulitāś sahaiva vibudhaiḥ kāśyāsamam brahmaṇā
kāśī kṣaṇitale sthitā gurutarā svargo laghutve gataḥ

Maṇikarṇikāstotra.

Perfection, moksa is won through jñāna or wisdom, bodhi or enlightenment. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth will make you free". Jñāna of the Hindus, bodhi of the Buddhists, and truth of the Christians do not mean dialectical fireworks, logical ingenuity. It is not playing "intellectual ping-pong", but it is growth in insight, increase of awareness, extension of consciousness, evolution of soul. It is attained, not by sharpening our wits but by steadying our mind. The function of true philosophy is to see the truth and we cannot see unless it be by unfettered contemplation, where eager wishes and yearning anxieties are stilled, where the mind becomes a transparent medium which mirrors the object without distorting it. We then become what we behold. India has always emphasised the need for spiritual illumination. Unless we are illumined from the heights above, earth-born intellect cannot take us far.

In the West, on the other hand, there has been a steady insistence on the power of the human intellect to discover the truth of things. When Socrates urged the need for concepts and definitions, when Plato argued that nobody need enter the Academy who had not studied Geometry, when Aristotle defined man, not as a spiritual but as a rational animal, when the whole of Christian scholasticism was one continuous deductive development of dogma, when Descartes, the father of modern European philosophy, laid down as a maxim that no idea is true which is not clear and distinct, when Spinoza set forth his Ethics in the geometrical pattern, with postulates, axioms and corollaries, when Leibniz outlined a plan which later became the foundation of symbolic logic,

when Kant effected a revolution by making metaphysics take the safe road of science, when Hegel said that the real was the rational and when his successors phenomenalised the self and the world, we find in this whole development from Socrates to Bertrand Russell impressive variations on the one common theme of the primacy of the logical.

Not that in India we neglected the logical. We also insist on the intellectual approach to the central problems of life. *Ati āto brahma jijnāsa ; athāto dharmajijnāsa*. The Upaniṣadas speak of *manana*, the *Gita* of *paripraśna*. The *Gita* says "Of those who debate, I am the dialectic" *vēdah pravadatām aham*. At a time like this, when teachers are setting themselves up in all parts of the country and requiring of their disciples complete surrender of the intellect, it is well to be reminded of the Indian tradition that intellect is to be satisfied and not surrendered. Freedom and not slavery of the mind is the pre-requisite of spiritual life. But intellectual fruition is in intuition, *vidyā* ends in *anubhava*.

In the West, there have been mystics and seers. the Orphics and the Eleusinians, Plato and Plotinus, St. John and St. Paul, the mediaeval mystics of Christendom and Islam. But this permeation of the Western rationalism by mystic tendencies has been, to no small extent, due to the influence of India, the ideas of the Upaniṣads, the missions of Asoka and their followers of later times.

To-day again, the world is in the grip of dry intellect. It is very conscious of its good sense, of the inestimable blessings which science has conferred on

humanity. It is proud that we have left behind the stupidities of the dark ages, that it has escaped from the misery and the degradation in which we were steeped for centuries. Scientific intellect expected, not only to unravel all secrets but even to transform human society. We admit that the triumphs of reason are great, but its failures are no less great. Something has escaped the meshes of intellect, the magic of far horizons, the secret of spirit, the pulse in the history of man, the beat in the heart of the world. Pitiful as had been the lot of the unlettered peasants, there was a ray of hope in their hearts, a spark of poetry in their lives. Superstitious they might have been, but they were not wholly forsaken. The fanatical personalities who rule the world today, the rationalist prophets, the intellectual celibates who are the victims of the fictional abstractions of race and class, tribe and nation, with their unbridled and endless covetousness have built a world which is bereft of pity and loveliness and is strident and murderous. The world is on the rack and is bleeding to death. This feverish age, where life is lived at the highest pressure, teaches us, that while it is necessary to perfect the intellect, it is even more necessary to refine the spirit. If the present world convulsion is to emerge in a new and better world order, we must acquire a living faith in love and wisdom. Here again the Orient with its distinctive message of wisdom in education, of the need for quiet, the quiet not of inaction but of harmony, of faith in the ultimates which shine through the vast uncertainties hanging over the march of life, can offer a corrective to the miscarriage of the world. The world is one family and

its brotherhood of the future should be based on heart and mind and not on chains and fear.

In our country today, the Oriental Conference can be of immense value. By a scholarly appreciation of India's historical culture, by a proper estimate of the interaction of the different races and religions, we can bring about a Renaissance based on the integrity of Indian culture.

It is a pleasure to know that we have the Pandita Parishad. These representatives of India's classical learning should be brought into close contact with those who have received the shock and stimulus of western knowledge and criticism. They should be reminded that the great Pandits and Acaryas of old were the ambassadors of India's culture in distant lands. The Brahmanical and the Buddhist monuments in Java, Bali, the temple of Angkor, that symphony in stone, which is perhaps the largest of its kind in the world, owe their inspiration to Indian Culture. Those great ancestors of our Pandits Vaśistha, and Viśvāmitra, Kāśyapa and Kumārajīva, Nāgārjuna and Samkara and countless others worked not for political power or economic possessions but for the spread of the spiritual message of India. *kṛṇvantu viśvam āryam*. The evils from which we suffer today are, to no small extent, due to our intellectual inertia, moral cowardice, spiritual lassitude. Nature is no friend of stagnation. For all our entreaties, the world will not cease to revolve. Today we have to reckon with the stresses, conflicts and confusions and build fresh schemes with originality and freedom and in

the strength of the legacy of ancient wisdom. In this world of *samsāra*, there is nothing permanent but change. Life is not life unless it is thrusting continuously into new forms. In the spirit of our tradition, which is one of comprehension and not withdrawal, let us move forward into the broader realm of responsibility for the whole community.

We have today with us a worthy Maithili Brahmin, a direct descendant of the great Mahamahopadhyaya who founded the Darbhanga Raj, a great lover of Indian Culture and a generous patron of this University. It is our good fortune that such a friend of the studies which the Oriental Conference represents is here to inaugurate the twelfth Oriental Conference. I now request him to open the Conference.

BENGAL FAMINE AND INDIAN POLITICS*

MR. CHANCELLOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

May I say how grateful I am to the University authorities for their kindness in asking me to speak at this Convocation? It is a pleasure for me to repeat, on some excuse or other, my visits to this University, where I spent the best part of my life. I should have addressed this Convocation last year but an unfortunate illness stood in the way. Thanks to the kind care and attention of your Vice-Chancellor and another member of your Senate Dr. Sivapada Bhattacharya, I speedily got over it. It is indeed very kind of the University to have renewed its invitation this year and given me this opportunity.

It is my agreeable duty to offer warm greetings and good wishes to the young men and women who have had degrees conferred on them today. They are going out into the world at a very critical time which is dynamic with great possibilities. University men, along with others, have had a testing time. This province is not yet free from the effects of one of the worst famines within living memory; the country is drifting into a broken and helpless condition and is in a mood of sour disillusion and the world convulsed with the agony of war has much fear for the future. It is my fervent hope

* An address to the convocation of the Calcutta University 4th March 1944.

that the education which you have received in this University and its colleges may help you to play your part effectively in the remodelling of your life and society in years to come.

This war has exposed the weakness of our Government, of our economic life, and our system of education. The death, in conditions of peace, of a million people due to famine, even if we accept the figure given by the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons, is not essentially different from or less costly than the death of a million people in any other part of the world. If we realise what this means in terms of human suffering and sorrow, we should be filled with shame and resentment and a burning desire to wipe out the conditions which make such things possible. The British Government has not yet divested itself of its responsibility for the Government of India. The country is richly endowed by nature with manpower, skill, talent and material resources. The example of other countries demonstrates that it is possible to increase the productivity of the soil, to control unemployment and destitution, and to raise the level of life. The diminished vitality of the people who live on a bare subsistence level, with no margin at all to provide for the failure of crops and other contingencies, who are largely without education, and suffer from low standards of public health and sanitation, points to the economic and political degradation of the country. A well-planned and vigorous economic expansion, involving the introduction of modern technical and industrial methods of producing

goods and services, an all-out development of education and public health alone can give relief to a long-suffering people and restore national vitality. We are not revolutionary by instinct but may become so by necessity. Revolutionary plans are apt to gather force, if the general community feels that serious attempts are not being made to redeem the people from conditions of poverty and squalor. Burke said : "Revolutions are produced not by those who lack power but by those, who holding power make bad use of it."

We require to transform the habits of people and their ways of thinking. A social revolution means an educational revolution. Education should have priority among the schemes of reconstruction now being considered. Social security, communications, health and sanitation are all important, but education which is concerned with the making of men is the most important. If we do not have the right kind of citizens, none of the other schemes will work successfully. No political arrangement can enfranchise a people, no industrial expansion can enrich them, no social privileges can assist them, if we do not have men and women with free minds and upright characters. An educational system, which believes in the freedom of the mind and the validity of character, is the most important part of any sound national planning.

Mr. Sargent's report gives us a comprehensive scheme of education for all stages from childhood to maturity and attempts to make the educational system organic to the community. It proceeds on the principle

which is accepted by all civilised governments that it is the fundamental obligation of the state to provide all its citizens with compulsory education from the age of 6 to the age of 14 at least. It makes provision for different kinds of instruction for children of different aptitudes and temperaments, and provides large scope for choice. It is a long term national enterprise and its full realisation will take at least a generation and demand the sustained efforts of the community and effective co-operation between the Government and other agencies. If India is not to lag behind other progressive countries the scheme must be put through. The usual excuse for doing nothing, poverty is urged against it. Addressing the Annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in this city on the 20th December, 1943, His Excellency the Viceroy said "I think it is clear, that, from the practical point of view, the full realisation of a scheme such as that outlined in the Sargent Report, must wait on other developments. India at present simply has not the money for such a scheme." How can the national wealth of the country be increased if we are not given the education which alone can equip us to increase the wealth? The expense must be incurred and the money found. In a speech which Lord Wavell gave in London just before he left England for India to assume the Viceroyalty, he said: "It has always seemed to me a curious fact that money is forthcoming in any quantity for a war, but that no nation has ever yet produced the money on the same scale to fight the evils of peace—poverty, lack of education, unemployment, ill health." It is a pleasure to know

that in his address to the Central Legislature, he remarked that "the vital matters of health and education will not be allowed to stand still". But this negative assurance is not enough. Educational expansion is the foundation of all reconstruction and the money for it must be found.

An Indian Government with the confidence of the people will be able to raise the sums essential for the national effort of educational and industrial expansion. The Viceroy tells us that the present Government of India is "mainly an Indian Government". The presence of a number of eminent Indians does not make the Government a national one. Who lays down the policy? Who wields the power? The Viceroy stated that the aim of His Majesty's Government is to see India a united country, enjoying complete and unqualified self-government as a willing partner of the British Commonwealth. But a mere declaration of principle does not right a wrong. We sometimes believe that when a thing has been said it has been done. The complacency with which the British Government falls back on the disagreements among Indians, is a distressing feature. Speaking at the East India Association, Lord Erskine said: "Parliament is responsible for the good government of the Indian Empire and it would be a betrayal of our trust, were we to allow the difficulties of the situation to turn us from our declared purpose of leading the Indian peoples to full self-government." Surely if the difficulties do not embarrass the Government in the effective prosecution of the war with this province as the chief base for operations

against Japan, are they so formidable as to prevent the establishment of a national Government in India, with effective safeguards during the period of the War? We do not deny that the progressive forces of the country spar between themselves for shadowy differences in ideals and they lose the benefits which might be won for the people by concerted action, but is co-operation among the parties facilitated by the helpful action of the Government? The world looks upon India as the supreme test of British statesmanship and sincerity of purpose. The best answer to the Nazis is to stand up and perform according to the ideals we profess. The problem will become acute at the end of the war if full self-government is not established by then. There are over two million Indians in the fighting services with about 10,000 officers and another six millions are engaged in factories doing war work. Thousands are being trained as officers for the fighting services. They are getting into contact with the soldiers of the Allied nations and are being imbued with the ideals of liberty and humanity, and when they return, they should not be faced with bitterness and disillusion.

India is not indifferent to the issues of this war, notwithstanding her political differences with Great Britain. The ultimate issue of this war is not properly defined as a conflict between rival imperialisms due to the clash of economic interests between the Haves and the Havenots among the nations. It is not a conflict between rival forms of government, a duel between democracies and dictatorships. With Russia among the Allies such a claim

cannot be sustained. It is really a conflict between the future and the past, between international order and justice and international anarchy and injustice. India knows that the victory of the Axis powers will mean fear and death and the destruction of all values, moral, cultural and social, while the victory of the Allies has possibilities of hope and life. Millions in the flower of their youth have given up and are giving up happiness, health and life itself, they are suffering the pangs of separation from their homes, discomfort, exposure, torture in order that the world may be a better, kinder and juster place than it has been. While the phrases of Stalin's declarations, the Atlantic Charter and Roosevelt's proclamations about the four freedoms raise high hopes, the performances of the Allies do not measure up to the professions. The greatest surprise of the war has been Russia's heroic resistance to Nazi aggression but what will be the contribution to peace of a Russia which has grown nationalistic in sentiment, orthodox in religion and somewhat indifferent to the victory of the Proletarian revolution? The recent declaration of autonomy for the sixteen Soviet Republics, which will have their own armies and foreign representatives, is interpreted by some as an excuse, if not a justification, for annexing invaded countries without protest from their peoples and the Allied nations. I very much hope that this view is a misjudgment. What will be the attitude of America's Big Business? Will Mr. Churchill who is so insistent on preserving "traditional Britain" help to remove the fear of war from the heart of humanity? Even while we are marching towards victory, there are grave anxieties on the political

field and many suspect that the war is once again yielding to its inherent cruelty and narrowness of vision. War exerts a constant lowering pressure on our ideals and makes us ignore them in practice. There is a tendency to fall back into the old system of power politics, aggressive alliances and rival imperialisms. Among the masses there is a deep sense that with victory will come disillusion. The Archbishop of Canterbury said on the 23rd of March, 1943, "Horrible as it is, we have to realise that multitudes of our people actually fear the return of peace more than the continuance of war." Think of that. If the military victory is to be followed by a post-war period of noble professions and craven deeds, as it happened in the last war, the enormous price we pay for it, will be paid in vain and it will be a sacrifice of the best for the worst.

If this war which has no boundaries except those which God in His mercy has given to the world, results in a close searching of hearts, if it ends not only in a victory over the external enemies but over inner sloth, slackness and selfishness, it will mean a new dawn for mankind. We must be cured of our dangerous obsessions and distorted views. The forces that are to renew the face of the earth, must spring from men's hearts. Deliverance does not come from outside. The sword can impose it but cannot develop it. We must learn the lesson that all mankind is one. The oppression, persecution of any race wounds and menaces all. Another country's distress or discontent is our country's danger. We must become great of soul and rid ourselves of race prejudice and love of

power. The Atlantic Charter asks us to work for "a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries and which will afford assurance that *all men in all lands* may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want." Such faith is vain without works and works require that we should rid ourselves of the obsessions which are inadequate to the changing conditions of life. Our minds must be lifted out of the rut of past habit. Only then can we build up a great human society fostering and developing the cultural resources of the different peoples. Wendell L. Wilkie observes: "Brilliant victories in the field will not win for us this war now going on in the far reaches of the world: only new men and new ideas in the machinery of our relations with the peoples of the East can win the victory, without which any peace will be only another armistice." All our hopes will be frustrated if the statesmen who will work at the peace conference are not inspired by a spiritual purpose and love for the common man.

The world crisis is only superficially economic and political, it is essentially moral and spiritual. War is a symptom, not a disease. It can be removed only by curing the spiritual condition of society. "Without virtue," Aristotle said, "man is merely the most dangerous of the animals." By calling on men to be better, we cannot make them better. Through schools and colleges, through the social and political institutions they must be moulded into proper shape, and made new. The Nazi and the Bolshevist systems of education have

been largely successful in engendering a radically new type of man. Education is the means to it. The world crisis means that there is a demand for a revision of aims. Sir Richard Livingstone in his work on the *Future in Education* sets forth admirably the nature of the present crisis : " Our present situation reveals the great need of the world. If the conventional stranger from Mars arrived in Europe this moment—after a journey through the air more hazardous than usual—he would not so much be surprised by the fact that a war is in progress, for war unfortunately is nothing new, but he would be struck by something far more serious, by the appearance of a new philosophy of life." He refers to the disappearance of moral and religious ideas of liberty, justice and truth which have helped us to tame barbarism. The essential aim of education, according to the ancient Indians and the Greeks is initiation into the higher life of spirit. It is to be reborn. The whole soul must be turned round towards the light, Plato tells us, so that its eye may receive the truth. Only then can we have the right outlook on life. Where there is no vision, the people perish ; for lack of restraint, the rule of law lapses and the community falls into chaos. While the power of controlling the forces of nature has increased enormously, our power to control human nature has scarcely advanced. In science and technology we have made tremendous progress but all these forms of progress do not relieve man of his burden of the inner world. The external march of things does not alter the inward struggle. The mechanical devices and even psychological techniques do not touch the inner depths. A pride in our own

past has been our chief defect. A little humility will do us great good. Humility, it is said, is to know the truth about oneself. We must face the naked truth that we are prone to put the interest of our family or groups higher than those of the general community. We are inclined to exaggerate our own wrongs and secure our interests at the expense of other people. "Bear ye one another's burdens" is spoken of nations as of individuals. True greatness is a quality of soul; it is humanity. The truly educated are those who are their own masters, whose minds do not fall an easy prey to half-truths, prejudices or interested propaganda, who have enough poise to distinguish between a rational argument and a mass appeal to passion. In a university we are members of a great company by whose law of compassion and justice we are protected and bound. *Dharmo rakṣati rakṣitaḥ*. We should strive after a purified and ennobled patriotism which will disdain to use wrong methods even for saving a nation.

What makes a nation is not race or religion but a way of life. India is not a geographical expression, nor is it a collection of individuals. It is a tradition, an order of thought and manners, a loyalty to certain fundamental values, fostered by all races and religions which have found a home in this land. We should not be seduced from adherence to these great values by the bribes of comfort or pleasure. In a rapidly changing world, it is not easy to think or speak of things which do not change, the foundation of the good in us, the faith in spirit, the beauty of action and the endurance of life's charges.

But ultimately, these are the forces which will forge the future of humanity. We cannot fight against the gods. India cannot and has no desire to lead the world by virtue of her military strength or industrial efficiency. Nations hereafter must think less about domination and more about service and we believe that India and China have a special contribution to make in a period of political and social reconstruction. If you are to write with honour a new chapter in our history, you must develop respect for those values which are neither national nor international but universal. The future of humanity is bound up with the regeneration of the deeper foundations without which no political structure can last and the growth of a new loyalty to the world-community. India's present condition is a challenge and an opportunity. It is my hope and faith that you shall not be found lacking in vision, courage and strength to meet that challenge and use that opportunity.

RELIGION AND SOCIAL SERVICE*

I greatly appreciate the honor which the authorities of this school have done me in asking me to speak to them to-day. It is a matter of regret to me that I was not able to accept their invitation in previous years. To-day I have an opportunity to pay my tribute of admiration to the Tatas, not only for their great enterprise in the industrial life of our country, but also for the wisdom with which they devote a good part of their fortune to the service of the public, of which this school is an illustration. I have addressed several convocations of established universities without feeling much embarrassment but this function gives me a good deal of uneasiness as I am not sure about the line I should adopt in addressing young men and women who have had two years of training in methods of social work and welfare. Neighbourhood House on one side and the Tata School on the other suggest the theme : Religion and Social Service.

What is social work ? In a sense all departments of State, medicine, law, engineering, education, health are public service institutions. All activities which are more than egoistic are social ; even activities which are apparently egoistic have social effects. The solitary hermit who saves himself by his effort saves the world by his example.

* An address delivered on 10-4-1944 to the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work.

We may define service as any action which helps others at a cost to oneself. The cost may be in time, thought or money. If we spend any of them on the needs of others, we do service. To visit the lonely, to comfort the needy, to listen patiently to other people's worries, to undertake voluntarily uninteresting jobs is to do service. We do it with pleasure, if we care for and love humanity. Love expresses itself in service. The greatest servants of humanity are those who love and suffer for it, Buddha, Jesus, St. Francis, Gandhi. To love is to suffer. The more we love, the more we suffer. Infinite love is infinite suffering. So even God is represented as a sufferer. Śiva is Nilakantha; Christ has a crown of thorns. We pray to God as the great helper of humanity, to give food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, to comfort the mournful, cheer the dismayed, strengthen the weak, deliver the oppressed, and give hope and courage to them that are out of heart.

As such a conception of God sometimes encouraged men to throw the burden on God and themselves withdraw from the scene of mankind's social agony, religion came to be regarded as a sort of escapism, a flight from society. Religion, it is said, seeks for supernatural guidance in the solution of social problems. Even as the worried seek the aid of astrologers, the troubled and the forlorn seek the guidance of God. The old sea-Captain said to a frightened passenger in a storm, "So long as the sailors are swearing, Ma'am, we are alright; if you hear them praying, put on your life-belt." When we do not see any way out, we get afraid and turn religious. We are afraid in two ways: We are frustrated by nature

and by society. The ultimate frustration of all is death; and the social frustration is due to poverty and social injustice. Marx puts it: "The omnipotence of God is nothing but the fantastic reflection of the impotence of people before nature and before the economic social relations created by themselves." The remedy for frustration by nature lies in the extension of our control over nature by science. The remedy for the frustration by economic injustice lies in social revolution.

There are certain elements of truth in Marx's analysis, though he exaggerates them. Religion, it is true, is resorted to by those who refuse to face the problems; it has been used to distract men's attention from science, and the rich have used to keep the poor contented, and yet this is not the real meaning of religion. If we ask why the phenomenon of religion arises, we will find that it is due to the rise of intellectuality at the human level. There is a break in the normal and natural order of things due to the emergence of self-conscious reason. The rest of nature goes on in absolute tranquillity but man becomes aware of the inevitability of death. The knowledge of death produces the fear of death. Who shall save me from the body of this death? Buddha's religious sense was stirred by the sight of an old man, a diseased man, a dead man and a mendicant. Why should there be death and disease? Can this feeling of frustration be remedied by science? Grant that we can anticipate the course of nature and to some extent control it. Can nature be tamed to do man's bidding? Her blind caprices, her storms and tempests, her cyclones

and earthquakes will continue to shatter his work and dash his dreams. Can science alter the limits of man's life and his body? "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee." The *Bhagavadgītā* says that all created beings have an unknown beginning, a known middle and an unknown end (II. 28). The dark spaces are there and except for those who refuse to think, the mark of ignorance remains. Inward security cannot be achieved through science and technology. The frustration by nature is something common to all, rich and poor. If religion is a device to soothe the sorrows of the human heart, if it is a drug to soften the tragic sense of human life, so long as science cannot answer the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" so long as the fear of death is a common anxiety, religion has a place in human life.

Marx refers to social injustice. Man's innocence, his sense of fellow-feeling, his at-oneness with the universe is disturbed by the development of self-consciousness and self-will. He puts his individual preferences above social welfare. He looks upon himself as something lonely, final and absolute and treats every other man as his potential enemy. He becomes an acquisitive soul adopting a defensive attitude towards society. He fears every footstep he hears and trembles at every unexpected knock at the door. Though he is by nature social, he often prefers his individual advantage to the interests of the social order. The moral evils of falsity, pride and treachery arise. Animals do not wage wars as men do. The fear of physical evil, death, moral evil,

selfishness breaks up his unity, distracts his mind and clouds his vision. How can this disintegration of man's self, this conflict with nature and society be overcome? How can this fall from harmony be restored to unity? How can we get fearlessness or abhaya, who can tell us 'mā śucah,' be not afraid? How can we rise from a disrupted consciousness to a harmonised one, from division and conflict into freedom and love? How can we build a world of freedom and love and be released from the present world of fear and hate?

Marx tells us that the improvement of social conditions is essential. That there is much need for that in our country, goes without saying. Sir William Beveridge said the other day that Great Britain had to fight the five giants of want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness. If, with its high standard of living, extensive medical relief, wide-spread education, Great Britain has to tackle these problems, the case for a drive against want, ignorance, disease, poverty and squalor is very much stronger in this country. There are millions who have never slept on a bed or taken a cooked meal, millions who accept dirt and vermin as their natural environment. Our social institutions must be so altered as to give each human being a chance for full self-expression and all the hindrances to human development due to ignorance and bad surroundings require to be removed. Any government which realises its elementary responsibilities to the governed will have to tackle this task of improvement of public health and sanitation, development of education and rapid application of science to agriculture and indus-

try more seriously than heretofore and even governments can be shamed into activity by private enterprise. India is no more in that mood of fatalistic resignation which accepts poverty, squalor and unemployment as unavoidable. Tagore paid special attention to rural development and Gandhi has insisted on it. In the villages where the large majority of our people live, there are not adequate facilities for the education of children, for the fostering of village industries, for medical relief and cultural growth. We must rouse the minds of the villagers, if we are to vitalise village life.

Even if we bring about widespread education, improve methods of agriculture, apply modern industrial technique to the problems of production and distribution, and raise the standard of life, the need for social work and service will not diminish. All the outward conditions may be present and yet decent and dignified human life may not be possible. A planned life in which our employment is compulsorily provided for us, in which we are deprived of our responsibility not only for our own lives but also for the care and welfare of our families, which involves the maximum of social security is no compensation for the loss of individual responsibility and freedom. Field Marshal Smuts says, "Liberty in its full human sense, freedom of thought, speech, action, self-expression - there is less to-day than at any time in the past two thousand years." For a civilised existence, both security and freedom are essential. Every human being should be guaranteed sufficient food and clothing and adequate housing but we should recognise that the needs

of men are not merely material. If we do not have an atmosphere of freedom, we become professionals, lawyers or doctors, engineers or teachers but we cease to be human beings. We lead unnatural lives, which are empty and burdensome. If we scorn the spirit, our acts will have no joy and our life no serenity.

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This war is a symptom of the inward disease from which we are suffering. Its springs are in the invisible world. Why are there slums in Bombay? Why was there a famine in Bengal? Why are there Hindu-Muslim conflicts? Why have the Leagues of Nations, the Disarmament Conferences, and other world movements failed? Why do nations which can live in peace and adjust their differences by negotiation resort to wars with all their sorrow, desolation and misery? Imagine the amount of suffering which wars produce. Leave aside the dead but look at the maimed, the bereaved, the exiled, the anxious and the ruined, the millions who are bewildered, broken and bereft of faith and hope. The foundations of social life crumble, the standards of behaviour break down and barbarism is let loose.

For all this widespread misery, it is no use condemning any individuals or group of individuals. If an idiot commits a murder, we are shocked by his act but we do not hate him because we feel that here is a human being from whom fate has taken away the birthright of discrimination and judgment. Those responsible for this greatest of all evils, the world-war, are not a few individuals or groups but a general way of life. Our



enemies are as much the products of their environment even as we are. Take the Germans who are fighting against us in this war. They grew up in an atmosphere of violence. They were taught at home and school that duty and honour meant vengeance on Germany's enemies and when they came of age, they found that Hitler was in power and the doctrine of vengeance was consecrated as the state religion. With so many years of teaching behind them, if they grow mad, can we hold them responsible? They are our neighbours and need our help.

We are to-day filled with the hope of final victory but are uncertain and anxious about the peace settlement. The last war was won and the militarists whose existence was threatened by talks of disarmament and diplomats, who felt that their occupation would be gone if the League of Nations succeeded, kept the fires of hate burning. This peace will end in frustration, if we hide from ourselves our real faults by a smokescreen of righteousness. Unless we instruct ourselves in the processes which lead to wars and attempt to remove them, military and political measures by themselves, will not achieve much. Temporary expedients may result in intervals of peace, but cannot achieve permanent security. The old institutions which have brought death and despair to successive generations are dead at the roots. We want a new world where freedom does not mean freedom to exploit fellowmen and culture does not mean intellectual dope. The root causes of universal failure, greed and selfishness, individual and collective,

require to be removed. This can be done only by a revolutionary change of outlook and will, a rebirth of spiritual life. We must cultivate the qualities that separate man from the beast, love of truth, pursuit of goodness, sensitiveness to beauty, compassion and tolerance, and not those which we share with the animals, lust, cruelty and greed. Galsworthy writes "Men may have a mint of sterling qualities, be vigorous, adventurous, brave, upright and self-sacrificing; be preachers and teachers; keen, coolheaded just, industrious -- if they have not the love of beauty, they will be still making wars." Here Galsworthy is asking us not to be content with a closed scientific rationalism. Science has given a distinctive cast and colour to the modern consciousness. It has added to the scope and stature of the human mind. Its gains are incalculable. Its increasing application to agriculture and industry will raise the level of human welfare, but science is not all. The scientific approach is not the only approach to reality; nor is it the most important. A human being is not a differential equation. So long as we study human beings logically, psychologically or sociologically, we deal with them in fractions and not as wholes. The fundamental reality of life is in the interplay, conflict and continuous adjustment of a multitude of different finite points of view. Each point of view requires to be treated with respect. "The materialist," says Eddington, "must presumably hold the belief that his wife is a rather elaborate differential equation, but he is probably tactful enough not to obtrude this opinion in domestic life." The scientific view of man requires

to be supplemented by the religious which regards a human being as a spark of spirit, a ray of the divine. We must develop faith in man as subject rather than as object, a source of creation and inspiration and not a passive product of social surroundings. Man is made in the image of God. He is a creator. Human nature must be lifted out of its immediate urgencies and local needs and taken up to the high places of life, from which it can see and understand the meaning of life. Until this faith is followed by works, we will not have true democracy. Walt Whitman said, "Democracy is a great word, whose history, I suppose, remains unwritten, because that history has yet to be enacted."

While science will add to the richness of life, social improvement will make creative life possible. Even then most women and many men will remain lonely, damped and worried. Many will still be without zest for life and without freshness in vision. They will require not curiosity but understanding, not sermons but sympathy, a lively perception and a sharing of each other's sorrows, a bearing of one another's burdens. I hope very much that in this school first things are placed first. I wish all those who go out into life from here, useful and beautiful careers for which there is so much scope to-day.

